

LUKE

FIRST CENTURY

CHRISTIAN



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By

Graham Chambers Hunter

INTRODUCTION BY
MURIEL LESTER

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DEDICATED
TO
A CHURCH IN CALIFORNIA
WHICH BELIEVES IN JESUS
ALLOWS FREEDOM, AND ASKS ACTION
AND TO
ITS DEAREST
AND MOST PATIENT MEMBER

¶ In the preparation of this book Allan, Elizabeth, and Stanley Hunter have helped; Marjorie Allen; Gurdon Oxtoby of San Francisco Theological Seminary; Franklin Cogswell of the Missionary Education Movement; though he does not know it, James Moffatt, whose new translation opened up the Acts of the Apostles; and many others.

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Introduction

BY

MURIEL LESTER

KINGSLEY HALL, LONDON

TRAVELLING continuously up and down and across this lovely and hospitable country, one contracts the habit of eagerly scanning the bookshelves of each successive guest room. On one occasion I found some loose manuscript pages by my bedside. "You'll probably enjoy those," I was told. Next day I asked for more but heard that the rest of the book was a night's journey away. A month later, when I met its author, Graham Hunter, of Fullerton, California, and had the whole book in my hands, he asked me to write the introduction.

He seems to have made personal acquaintance with the friends and early followers of Jesus. In his pages we get to know them too, for the Christian story is an intimate and homely affair, appealing to head, heart and hand. This company of friends has grown through nearly forty generations. Across five continents we know ourselves to be united, though the earth shake with gunfire and the air get sick with poison.

In Brazil there was recently enacted a law enforcing phonetic spelling. All foreign words were to be unchanged. The H was deleted from the name of Christ. A group was discussing the situation. One of them greatly objected to the new spelling, "Cristo." He was

summarily silenced, however, by another saying "But He isn't a foreigner."

When Mr. Gandhi was walking and talking with a few of us in the shadow of the Alps one cold winter dawn in 1931, he said, "Jesus in the East caught a breath of the Spirit of God and gave it to the world. The West took it and turned it into a system, and a bad one. That is why I call myself not Christian."

The friends and early followers of Jesus were characterized by their respect for personality, their passion for justice, and their conviction that the good things of the world are God's gift to all men, to all who need, irrespective of their deserts. Seeing that this was the distinguishing mark of the people who were first called Christians, it seems strange and terrible that it could have been so effectually camouflaged and blocked out of the picture that the Church is now often considered as the especial preserve of the privileged class.

During the past thirty-two years I have been working and living in East London among factory girls and unskilled laborers. It was not long before I realized that my new neighbors were not far from the Kingdom of God. Their generous way of life and vigorous faith and apparently irrational hope impressed me so deeply that I set myself to learn from them. I have not yet reached up to their standards. The Church needs them and Church members need to stop exploiting them. Everywhere men are longing for a new social order wherein one's dreams shall not be spoiled, one's sleep disturbed, and one's home haunted by the thought of other people who lack food and shelter. Fascism, communism, im-

perialistic democracy, economic nationalism, all claim that they can provide these elemental necessities. They demand that for a time we must be ruthless in order that eventually we may have mercy; for a time enthroned injustice so that justice be finally secured. We must part with truth as a principle and use it only as a policy, they say; we must kill in order not to have to kill. All these are short cuts, crude surgical operations practised on millions of weary, disheartened people. But short cuts often prove to be the longest way home.

Luke declares that Christ's way is the practical one. Luke was as realist as is a woman. He knew that it is the visionary and the mystic element in man that will keep him fresh and enthusiastic in the face of loss, danger and defeat. When it seems sheer waste of effort to go on trying, the discipline of prayer, the dynamic of love, will permit him neither to give up nor to regret his choice.

Perhaps the world is waiting for a more fundamental, scientific, reliable program, one that will release the goodwill, the sanity and sense that is inherent in our common human nature.

Graham Hunter knows Palestine. He has lived and worked there in another branch of the very profession that a young Greek called Luke adorned. He shares the same passion for social justice as his hero. To make the acquaintance of his hero, Luke, in these pages, is a singular delight. I think all who read this book will be grateful to Graham Hunter.

Writing from Japan, where amidst this kindly people one absorbs from their homes, schools, classical drama and churches something that enriches our common life, it is of good omen to hear that the royalties made from the sale of this volume are to be sent over here to help the work of the cooperatives that Dr. Kagawa has helped the working people to set up in many a slum and many an agricultural district in Japan. The co-operative pawn-shop, farm and hospital are giving new life and new hope to many thousands of citizens. Kagawa manifests Christianity in action.

WHEN the author of the Third Gospel let Zaccheus, part villain, part clown, and part hero, sidle diffidently across his pages, he opened the door wide on his own personality, and let us know what he was interested in. Writing in one of the great cities of the Empire he was concerned with its huge social problem. He cared about the common man, and about the change in men and customs by which personality might find release.

He had probably seen the place where Zaccheus had been the leading exploiter. During an enforced stay in Palestine, from 56 to 58 A.D., it is not unlikely that he had walked at least part of the way down the Roman road from the top of the Mount of Olives towards the Jordan Valley. If so, he might have been able to count, as the writer did one day, no less than nineteen thin, vertical, whirling columns of yellowish dust, parallel and straight and a thousand feet high, drawn from the high-pressured, over-heated, sheltered sink around Jericho. The heat evaporates the water of the white muddy river and leaves alkaline salt, and in his day the people of the land sawed out of it bricks from the shores of the blue Dead Sea. Using irrigation they also raised the medicinal balsam which he knew so well, and either dried it or made it into salve—the famous balm named after Gilead across the valley. They raised and gathered and packed famous dates; put the head

of a date-tree in hell and its feet in a river, say the Arabs; those conditions were fulfilled by the Jordan. Then private interests, represented by a man who had bought a contract to collect the taxes, came with privileges granted by the state and with the power of the state behind him, and took a full third of the product from him. The system was calamitous but well-intrenched; the taxes were collected by profiteers. A network of officials and others involved grew up, some of whom hated the system but were trapped in it and couldn't change it. It was a dog-eat-dog way to live, as Luke well knew. "We must abandon," says Ferrero,¹ "one of the most general and wide-spread misconceptions which teaches that Rome administered her provinces in a broad-minded spirit, consulting the general interest, and adopting wide and beneficent principles of government for the good of her subjects. Subject countries have never been so governed, either by Rome or any other empire. The dominant race has invariably attempted to secure the largest possible profit for itself with the least possible amount of risk and trouble."

On the one hand were absentee land-lords—Mark Antony had been one, then Cleopatra, then men who had villas in Italy; laws made in the interest of the owners; police and armed deputies and tax-gatherers sent to enforce them. On the other hand down in the heat of the valley were the fellahin—farmers and small merchants—toiling early and late, never getting ahead, and losing heart.

Into that situation Luke, following historical records,

¹ Ferrero, *Greatness and Decline of Rome*, vol. V, p. 3.

introduced Jesus. While outside the house people were complaining that he had gone in to eat with a man who was a sinner, indoors the tax-gatherer had caught a glimpse of how to live and was pledging himself to pity, to simplicity, and to social justice. To these three practical aims Jesus asked him to add a fourth—the joyous spontaneity and freedom of doing these things in fellowship with God, bringing release not only to the common people but also to Zaccheus. Luke must have seen in the incident, though he tells it briefly, more than history; it offered a goal and a way of creative living.

That Luke had the needs of his own generation in mind when he wrote his defense of Christianity is a commonplace insight of Bible students, confirmed by modern form-criticism. One does not need to think of him as the personification of the "cultic-needs" of the early church, or to believe with Professor J. M. Creed of Cambridge that the story of Zaccheus is an imaginative elaboration of the narrative in Mark's Gospel of the hospitality of Levi, or to take him as a sort of Parson Weems who embroidered historical incidents, to realize that Luke feels he has found in Christianity the solution of some of the most dangerous and pressing social problems of his own day. Ferrero tells us of the profiteers who followed the Roman armies as the currency follows the flag, amassed great fortunes, bought villas in Italy or built them in the great maritime cities and let their sons and daughters squander the gains of a great human advance. Luke had a profound social and

economic interest, which shows itself in a dozen and more places in his Gospel and the Acts.

There is evident, behind these two books, a keen and highly ethical mind and the creative ability of a social and literary artist. He let his long artistic fingers write us very little about himself, but here and there we catch the presence, as we read, of a witty, humorous, penetrating, passionate author; or are touched by his surges of pity for the distressed, or feel his indignation at entrenched wrongs. His motives, and even some of his adventures, we can discern, and they help us reconstruct a picture of a great Christian man of the first century, another one of the remarkable fellowship of men and women who literally created western civilization, or laid its foundations.

The truth is that we know more about Luke than we have sometimes admitted. His work is that of a literary Greek brought up in Hellenist traditions. We are sure that he had learned to use, in the Greek, the Jewish holy books. The personal element in his writing is clear, as recent Bible study has shown. We know that he turned Christian and we can see the radiant sort of man he became under "the influence of Christ," as the older generation would have said.

It is the belief of this study that the author of the third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles was himself the author of the "we" passages in Acts, that he placed them in his work designedly, as if to say, "This I myself witnessed"; and that he was the companion of Paul in Troas, in Macedonia, in Palestine, and in Rome.

He is too careful a writer to have used the word "we" in important passages without a purpose.

If so, he is almost certainly the physician and beloved friend of Paul's epistles, who sent his greetings to Philemon and to the acquaintances in Colossae. There are some facts which have been used in the other direction but they are far from insuperable: Luke's account of Paul's speech to the Galatians in Acts 13 has a different emphasis and flavor from that of the epistle² to the same people; but as Professor Goodspeed has shown, the church collected Paul's epistles only as a result of the writing of the Acts; Luke probably had not read Paul's letter. Luke also minimizes the conflict, of which he hints, between Paul and the Jews of Ephesus and of Jerusalem; but his emphasizing what "the Way" and the Jewish faith had in common was not only due to the need upon him to claim for the former a legal status as a proper branch of the latter, but also seems to have been a general attitude in Antioch in early days. There apparently for years Jewish food-laws were not strictly insisted on. His divergences from Paul are not enough to prove they were not comrades.

It is fairly clear, also, or at least highly probable, that Luke came from Antioch. This we infer partly from internal evidence. Professor Cadbury shows from a study of his phrases that his reactions were those of a city man. "If thou hadst known—" he quotes about Jerusalem, as if it had a personality. He shows a more

² Gal. 2:16, "A man is not justified by works of law but by the faith of Jesus Christ"; cf. Acts 13:34, "By him all that believe are justified for all things for which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

intimate knowledge of people and events in Antioch than of what happened anywhere else, recording the names and deeds of early leaders, and mentioning Antiochans who had migrated elsewhere, such as Nicolas and Jason. He thinks of the return to Antioch after each of the missionary journeys as coming back home. Paul's reference to "Lucius, my fellow-countryman" may have meant Luke, for provincials often took Latin names, as Honolulu Chinese sometimes assume English names which sound like their own; Saul called himself Paulus; and Silas took the name Silvanus, and there are other examples; the reference is to the Roman province from which both came. In the famous D manuscript of the 400's which Beza gave in 1581 to Cambridge, and which has part of an unabbreviated text of Acts with "additions," many of which Professor A. C. Clark³ of Oxford seems to have established as authentic, a "we" passage is connected with Antioch in Acts 11:28. The Muratorian fragment, the Monarchian Prologue, and Eusebius name Antioch as his home.

That he was younger than Paul, a contemporary of Timothy, is in keeping with the "we" passages, with Paul's references to him, and with the statement of the Monarchian Prologue that he died at the age of 74 near the end of the first century.

He tells us himself that he was a preacher and teacher of the Way about 49 A.D. when Paul came to Troas,

³ Clark, A. C., *The Acts of the Apostles* is a rejoinder to the third volume of *The Beginnings of Christianity*; even in the latter the late Professor Ropes admitted that practically all the earlier versions before about 250 A.D. used the slightly longer text. The unabridged version includes in Acts 11:28, "And there was much joy, and when we were assembled together—."

for he says, "We endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them."

That he wrote for Roman readers is made evident by Professor Cadbury's careful study of internal evidence in *The Making of Luke-Acts*, a book to which this study is much indebted. A natural step would be to suppose that he composed his manuscript in Rome. He appeals to his readers' interest in important contemporaries—Gallio, Herod Agrippa, who had been a close friend of the preceding emperor, and others.

That he wrote during Paul's imprisonment seems to be implied unescapably by the closing verses of Acts. The two volumes are a defence of Christianity and of the apostle Paul. The course of the argument of Acts leads the reader to expect either Paul's acquittal or else his glorious martyrdom. Luke has built up a sense of sympathy for Paul. We suffer with Paul in Caesarea and are proud of his courage during the shipwreck. Our spirits sink when the months in Rome drag themselves out to years. The author seems to expect a speedy release. But he does not tell of it, nor of a martyrdom which would have made Acts as climactic as the Gospel; his reason might well be that he wrote while the decision was pending. The lack of unanimity of great scholars on this point makes one cautious; the contrary argument is the change which Luke has made in recording Mark 13 in his own Gospel. Mark had said, "When ye see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not—"; Luke made it read, "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know

that her desolation is at hand." Yet every well-informed person in Rome in the early sixties must have been aware of the suspicion with which Jewish nationalism was regarded there. Josephus's visit to the capital in 61 A.D. awakened him to the danger of antagonizing opinion there and forcing a disaster; he came back to Palestine intent on softening the nationalist feelings. It is conceivable that even before the rebellion broke out in 66 A.D. Luke could have believed Jesus farsighted enough, in the generation before, to warn his people away from revolt against Rome. In this case the judgment of an historian is of equal weight with that of a critic, and we follow Professor Harnack. Professor Goodspeed's argument for a late date is that Luke foreshadows Paul's death in the farewell to the Ephesian elders; but the note of foreboding is in keeping both with Paul's terrible experiences in that city and with Luke's long-drawn-out agony during Paul's five years in prison. These six points about Luke are our beginning.

The picture of Luke which emerges from a study of his two volumes is of an artist, adventurer, and missionary, of a man radiant with humor and fortitude. This first century Christian was not a sentimentalist who avoided the rough and tumble of social conflict, nor an other-worldly recluse, but a gentleman of deep ethical fervor. Nor was he without philosophy and rootage; to him humanity's ultimate welfare is one with the will of God.

LUKE

FIRST CENTURY CHRISTIAN

have written, if he had left us anything about himself, that he too was a citizen of no mean city.

But Greek exclusiveness was cracking. In his father's childhood, when the emperor Augustus had started the new policy, the *Pax Romana*, the city had begun to spread southward high over the steep mountain, with straight streets in the newer Greek fashion, and also northward across the river Orontes. It was reaching out to claim as part of its household the chain of villages down the river twenty-five miles to its port on the sea. It was throbbing with life. He might have heard the advice one hears in our own West, "If you come to a town which isn't tearing up its streets, move on." Optimism was normal. Its population at the height in the second century is estimated at 800,000, including its slaves, and in Luke's day it was very large. Downtown the streets were lined with crowded tenements. Antioch had attracted thousands of people who spoke Aramaic, the mother-tongue of Palestine. Its main road was the gateway to the east, and the traffic made a lad realize that other cities and peoples lay beyond, up the river.

The boy's imagination must have stirred when a caravan of camels went swinging along the city streets. A resident of that region in recent years tells of seeing a thousand camels which had arrived in the night after a long journey from the Euphrates River. They brought their loads in Luke's day from even farther east, from Persia, or from India. Lads watched with interest their padded feet and lurching strides, their thin lips and supercilious faces. Each wore on its bridle, then as now, a blue bead to keep off the evil eye, and the Arab saying

is a proverb, "Twenty camels are led by a donkey and that shows the brains of a camel." But they represented commerce and were one of the causes of the city's wealth and of its growth. They brought rich, velvety, hand-tied rugs from Persian village looms, drugs and dates from Jericho, jewels and weapons and linens from Damascus, from whose name we have the word damask, embroideries and pearls from India, even silks from China, to be sent in ships to Italy or the Black Sea. More often they carried dried fruits from local plantations. Arriving sometimes in the night, and leaving before another dawn, able to endure great hardship and carry heavy loads, they must have suggested the desert and strange lands far away.

Some men in Antioch, fathers of boys he knew, made their living by buying and selling the goods which the caravans carried, and by shipping eastward the silver which ships brought to the port. The boy's explorations had taken him past comfortable homes on the southern hill of the city, and he was aware that the city contained many prosperous men who were thrifty, energetic and hard-working. He came in time to know that Antioch's merchants had pulled some of the world's great trade routes to their own valley. The commerce which Asia sent westward was increasingly in their hands, just as the commerce of Egypt and Africa went through the rival city, Alexandria. Some of them had built beautiful homes with their profits. They supplied huge slave-farms across the sea with food, or the prison-mines of the west from which the silver came. These were men like Demetrius and Zaccheus, who

made all life, even worship itself, yield them a profit. The fathers of other lads owned ships, which sailed from the port to Egypt, or Greece, or Italy, or even past the pillars of Herakles. These enterprising men and their industrious workmen were helping Antioch at least to live more comfortably. Prosperity was bringing leisure time; and civilization usually arises on the great trade routes.

We may expect that in Luke's early 'teens his father took him to look at the sea—a long seven hours' ride on horseback, the first half along a well-paved Roman road. Then they went on down a wide and famously beautiful valley, bordered by Musa Dagh on the north and another range to the south beyond the river. Before they came near the ocean, they saw the inner basin crowded that summer day with ships, with bowsprits projecting over the road from high prows that had strange carved figures; the heavenly twins were on a ship he was later to describe. They walked out on the mole also and saw Cyprus on the skyline and Homer's "wine-dark sea." The lad came to know ships and sailors well, as twenty years or so before him another lad named Saul, in a smaller seaport of the same province, had learned to love the ocean. One is tempted to think that the part of Antioch to which Luke's family belonged was Seleucia, the port. He talked often with sailors, we can believe, and learned about Greek islands around the bend of the coast, and thriving cities in Hellas, the home of his race. Or he heard Phoenician seamen tell about Tyre where women dyed their fine

home-woven linens with crimson from molluscs and shipped them for Roman nobles to wear, or about northern islands where painted men brought wool and hides to trade for dried fruits. He learned that once wars had made trade dangerous and expensive, but now raiders and pirates no longer infested the waters, for all the nations on the middle-sea had come one way or another into the Roman peace, and into the economic unity which followed it. Nations on the Mediterranean still had disputes, but they no longer sent ships out to wreck one another's trade, nor their young men to destroy one another's cities. That was the reason why the wharves were loaded with straw containers of dried apricots and figs and dates and liquorice root, and why the ships were able to bring tin from Britain, iron from Gaul, silver from Spain, marble from Greece, and ivory and ostrich-plumes from the mouth of the Nile. The sailors gave Luke a sense of belonging to a federation of a large part of the world.

The boy knew much about the Romans. With the sons of their families he had watched athletic contests in the stadium on the southern hill. Every boy of his circle had a Latin name as well as his family one. Luke had taken one himself, Lucius, besides his Greek name Loukas.¹ He knew also about famous Romans who had lived in Antioch. In his father's boyhood a military

¹ That Lucius and Loukas were sometimes interchanged is made apparent by Sir W. M. Ramsay's discovery of two inscriptions referring to the same man. So a disciple mentioned in *Colossians* whose Hebrew name was Joshua and Greek name Jesus called himself Justus, and John Bar-Mariam of Jerusalem, a contemporary probably a few years older than Luke, called himself Marcus.

governor, Tiberius, had gone to Italy and mounted the throne. In his grandfather's day Cicero had been governor. Many people of Antioch had the high privilege of being Roman citizens, and Luke himself almost certainly possessed that most desirable advantage.² The city sent a lot of money to Rome; the reason was the army. Antioch's merchants at one time paid the whole cost of the Roman regulars. Most of the Romans were army people or iron-nerved administrative officials. From them he learned a sense of order which later he was to carry into the church and into his study of the life of Jesus. It is he who preserves the idea that the Apostles were official leaders appointed by Jesus.

An increasing colony of virile and intelligent Jews also lived in his city, and there are indications that Luke's own family, Greek as they undoubtedly were, had come under Hebrew influence. Certainly Luke in his writings is to show a close and intimate knowledge of Hebrew ways. We suspect that his father had become friendly with or attached to the Hebrew colony, and perhaps a proselyte. Jews in Antioch were more broad-minded than some whom Luke was to meet later. They had no hesitation about fellowship with Greeks. They had, some of them, by tacit consent relaxed the food-laws of their race. The father had learned to admire the great writers of Palestine, so he may have brought up his boy to believe in the old He-

² Antioch was a free city. Later Luke was taken as an associate by Paul, who looked on Roman citizenship as practically essential for his staff. He also quotes with pride Paul's rejoinder to the army officer who said, "With a great price obtained I this freedom": "But I was free born."

brew idea of stewardship, or responsibility to the God of the Scriptures for life and property.

A boy notices the strange economic differences between families. When Luke went to the foot of the hill in Antioch, he saw lads of his own age who were thin, poorly educated, without medical attention, and who lived in small, crowded rooms. In the city they did not even have the clan protection which the villages had afforded. At first he took such things as unavoidable—"the poor ye have always with you"—but as he grew older, he learned that such a proverb need not be a prophecy. Antioch was full of laborers, or people from peasant homes, who were barely keeping alive, and existing on the very margin of subsistence. On the other hand, some thrifty and energetic people, and also people who were lucky, and some who were merely ruthless, had been allowed to take possession of the economic gains of a great social development. They were not men of bad character in general, but the extreme concentration which they had brought about of socially earned wealth had received no praise in the Old Testament Scriptures which he had studied. Luke knew some of them who had reached prominent places because of genuine ability and hard work, or because they had made important contributions to human welfare, but there were others who had acquired power and wealth merely because of border-line ethics. Some leaders of the province, such as the Herod family in Galilee, had obtained their huge estates through government grants for which they had given little service in return. The huge fortunes of his day had in

many cases been built up by a combination of both good and anti-social factors.

The boy and his father on their tramps outside the city must often have noticed also the villages, where rural people lived, as more than half the human race still does. The villages were strung out in an irregular network a mile, perhaps five miles, apart. No farmer thought of living on his land but walked home from his fields at night, for protection and fellowship. Village life was diverse and interesting. Each had its own specialty, its own ways, and its own spirit, and sometimes, the boy noticed, its own smell. Some villages spoke Greek, some Aramaic, the language of Palestine, and in some the Arabic-speaking Bedouin put up their black tents. Usually a grandfather was head-man, and most of the villagers were relatives. An expert could tell from what village a peasant came by noticing his dress and his speech. The fellahin worked hard for low wages and paid heavy taxes. They were growing poorer each decade. The swing all over the Empire was away from village farming towards large estates. Owners of large holdings could not only practise economies impossible on the smaller farms, but also were in a position to secure favors from the government which poorer farmers could not obtain. Where the profit of the landowner and not the general welfare of society was the main consideration, the small farmer was crowded out. Further, enterprising men discovered that they could make more profit by using forced labor than free, and increasingly men who wanted quick profits used slaves on their estates. There is hardly a

stronger indictment of the system of unrestricted competition than the ravages which it has worked through the ages in agricultural production. In Luke's time ex-farmers and men who had been free laborers flocked into the cities and added to the congestion of labor. They lived by casual labor in good times and in periods of depression subsisted on doles.

On the other hand the boy knew people in Antioch whose circumstances were luxurious in the extreme. Some of the wealthy men who lived there had drained Galilee, Phoenicia, and Damascus of their resources. They and their children were delightful and charming, and their minds were quite often ill at ease about the ruthless system by which their incomes had been secured; but they were unable to think of anything to do about it. When Luke as a lad tramped through the four famous quarters of his city, the contrast must have seemed iniquitous between its Fifth Avenue and its Second Avenue. A picture of the whole Roman world was there, one section in squalor, crowded, proletarian, with insufficient food and medical care for the children, no security in old age, frequent unemployment, and little chance for its young people. Another much smaller section was made up of people able to spend lavishly, and largely blind to the worries and fears of the poor.

It is probable that at some time in his childhood Luke absorbed an enthusiasm to help the unprivileged. His heart was tender, and he caught a passion of pity for the needy. His later life is evidence that in his youth he learned to sympathize with the poor. Of his father

we know nothing directly, but the sense of compassion which the boy gained from the older generation reveals the parent as a character unusual in pre-Christian times. The boy Luke seems to have received a thorough grounding in the Old Testament, so that his father may have taught the boy the keen ethical discernment of the prophets. We can imagine father and son tramping in the country together, going to see the workers' quarters, or chatting with villagers on the big estates. The lad came to feel that his city and province would be far happier if some new power and new spirit were to sweep through people's minds and customs and institutions. His age cried for some new movement to use the rich stores of available wealth so as to release human abilities on a far wider scale.

The world which he knew needed God in its human relations. It wanted the coming of some personality to bring to the poor the promise of a new day and to say, "Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." In Antioch there were the selfish and the wasters also, to whom it would be only justice to say, "Woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation."

As the lad grew into adolescence, he came to feel the contrast and injustice of it all. He wanted to help. The humanitarian interest which he breathes into his writings may be the reason why he became a physician, and have brought him into touch with the Christians of Antioch.

In the year 40 when Luke may have been twenty

years old, the Roman governor Marius started the legions marching northward, at the emperor's command, toward Armenia. One wonders if Luke was not by that time in training as a physician and if he was not called on to care for poor fellows with gangrenous wounds or wasted by amœbic dysentery. After every campaign squads of exhausted prisoners came staggering in, despairing, on the way to be sold as slaves. The armies always sent the able-bodied men of conquered territories into slavery. Such brutality they thought was a necessity. People longed in vain for a more merciful way.

It is a tribute, however, to Roman education in the provinces that so joyous and clear-sighted a character as Luke could come out of its system of child-training. Under the earlier native kings he would have had his wings clipped. Under a rabbinical system he might have become a mere commentator on the ideas of someone else. The Romans gave him liberty, and he always admired them. In time he was to catch a contagion, an enthusiasm, a burning earnestness about creating a new world, and a sense of joy, hope, and guidance.

It was when Luke was about ten years of age, so far as we can estimate, that in a city two hundred miles south of his home, and in a region attached to the same province, a Man, of whom he had never heard, died a shameful and cruel death on a cross.

Luke Meets Followers of the Way

LUKE does not tell us directly what turned him from paganism to Christianity, but he has left a clue here and there. For one thing, he hated superstition, and the Greek and Syrian world of his youth was full of it. The old Greek religion was practically gone in his day, except for processions financed by the state, survivals in the practice of the peasant and the laborer, and a legacy to the mystery-religions. The philosophers had long ago shot to pieces its belief in many gods. The fine old temples which the Greek kings had built in Antioch were damaged by the earthquake of Luke's youth (37 A.D.) and even before that had lost their drawing power. But the philosophers had not set up any substitute. With religion gone, many were satisfying their inner needs by experimenting with charms, incantations and psychic practices. Superstition had swept so far among masses and even among intellectuals that Seneca, Luke's older contemporary, was soon to write a book exposing it. Luke's aversion to superstition, which is very evident in *Acts*, probably began before his conversion.

Adaptations of the ancient and outgrown ways of placating the unseen did not satisfy him. The rank superstition and nature-worship of the ordinary man

was relieved and brightened and sometimes elevated by festivals and temple-rituals. Besides the old Greek temples at the foot of the hill there were newer buildings of limestone or marble to house other forms of worship. Devotees had brought a couple of luck-giving cults over the sea from Greece, that of Dionysus and that of Orpheus. In Luke's period laymen opened private places of worship of their own on the downtown streets. Anyone who wished might set up his shingle and act as a priest. To such places people flocked who were starting on journeys or who wanted a charm against sickness in their homes; they paid their fees and took away their blessings. There were celebrations, also, of holidays connected with the old Syrian cult of the wheat spirit, Adonis. The latter name is a form of the Semitic root 'Adon, meaning Lord, and corresponds to the *ba'al* of the Old Testament. Such worship was as old as ancient Canaan, hoary with antiquity in Luke's time. Some of the celebrations were civic festivals supported by public funds. These survivals of the old religions were sometimes public scandals. Too often they were accompanied by ritual vice or led to self-mutilation.

Intellectuals of Antioch were more likely to join some inner circle of people who looked to private meetings and secret rituals for inspiration and enlightenment. The city had many more or less formal societies where men met other men, dramatized some ancient myth, and listened to explanations of its symbolism. These "mystery-cults" had grown out of the older religions when men began to want something more per-

sonal than public ceremonies, and deeper than the rituals at the temples. The feeling was widespread in the first century that the intellectual answer to the problem of how to live a good life was inadequate. Philosophy had lost its savor.¹ The number of men and women who wanted a religious explanation of life was increasing. Physics and metaphysics gave them no adequate promise of saving the human race. But the ancient Syrian myth of Adonis, if sublimated and made intellectual, might be used to explain the problem of human suffering, with its dramatization of the sowing of wheat in the late autumn after the rains, its death in the ground, its rising again in the spring, and its yield of food and seed. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die" is a metaphor which the mystery-religions would have understood. Their rituals portrayed with musical accompaniment the death of the wheat-spirit whom the worshippers hailed as "lord," the mourning by his mother and the women, and his coming to life again. Lecturers also explained the meaning of the drama in terms of human life. Other societies employed different names and symbolisms, but most of them had similar customs and ideas.

A man might adhere to such a group without arriving at any well-reasoned or deeply-felt profession of faith. The mystery-religions did not ask for conversion nor expect long-continued loyalty. A "joiner" entered upon a period of probation and preparation, with ritual cleansing and the discipline of meditation. Then he

¹ Angus, S., *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, p. 11.

went through an initiation, with an elaborate ceremony if he could afford it. At such a time, as also in his later worship, he was insistently instructed to put himself in a passive and receptive attitude so that the drama, or the sacrament, or the continued contemplation of sacred objects, or the speech of the priest, might work on him with the force of suggestion. Some of the worshippers reached through the outward forms and attained immensely moving inner experiences. The higher stage of insight, or *epopteia*, when one becomes an "eyewitness" of inner truth, was well recognized and highly desired. Some of the devotees have recorded seeing a blinding light or a heavenly visitant, or of hearing a divine command.²

The cults touched the imagination and gave a sense of deliverance from demons and the fear of death. They made a deep impression on the Roman world. The Romans recognized the obligation on a man to follow his conscience if he had had a vision. For example, they allowed a trader named Elim to erect an inscription near Naples in 79 A.D. stating that he had brought his cult with him from Sarepta in Palestine, "in accordance with a command."³

Another mystery-religion which one might follow for a time and drop when convenient centered around the Egyptian myth of Sarapis and the lady Isis. The ritual portrayed her as finding the dismembered pieces of her hero and putting them together so that he came

² Angus, S., *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, p. 135; Nock, A. D., *Conversion*, p. 113.

³ Nock, A. D., *Conversion*, p. 66.

back to life—a symbolic story. Another set of people dramatized the adventure of Attis and Cybele, with a myth like that of Adonis. Another cult was that of Atargatis, the Syrian goddess, to whom even in far-away Berea in Macedonia worshippers had erected a shrine two hundred years before. The rites of Dionysus used alcohol to help secure the desired stage of insight. In official circles and the army the cult of Mithra was popular, with customs and ideals imported from Persia, a conviction that the human body and everything else material was naturally evil, and a Zoroastrian reverence for the sun. Every Antioch lad knew about them and had listened with shuddering awe to tales about Astarte and Adonis, or about Cybele and Attis, or about Demeter and her daughter Persephone, each with its gruesomeness and its thrill. At their highest the mystery-religions used great words: salvation, redemption, savior, lord. Salvation meant health, luck, prosperity, and also something deeper, a sense of being at home in the universe.

Many Greeks had asked, "What must I do to be saved?" long before the Philippian jailer put that question to Paul and Silas, meaning, "What must I do to escape the unpleasant consequences of what has happened?"⁴ In religious experience such people found a feeling of the presence of something other than themselves, filling them with awe and a sense of dependence, and giving them a promise of something better after death than the cold and lonely shadow-life of Greek

⁴ Nock, A. D., *Conversion*, p. 9.

mythology. They gained comfort in sorrow and courage to face death. But the cults were weak in philosophy and sometimes portrayed a morality far below even the prevailing standards. They could not satisfy a young man who craved an ethical release for himself and for society, and we know that in that city on the swift-flowing Orontes they did not satisfy Luke. We may think of him as he grew into older adolescence, experimenting with their worship and finding a sense of unreality about it. A keen mind like his was repelled because, fundamentally, their stories were not true. While better than a blank denial of all that one could not see and measure, and better than materialism, they did not reach deep enough into truth to satisfy his soul.

Luke then, we infer from his writings, tried Judaism. He must have found the worship of the Hellenistic Jews an immense improvement on paganism. They taught a vital faith in the living God, a faith far above popular superstitions and higher in morality and belief than the mystery cults. Luke studied their Scriptures in the Greek version called the Septuagint—because it had had seventy translators. He came to know it thoroughly, for he quotes it frequently. Many of the leaders of the Dispersion in Antioch seem to have been broad-minded men who welcomed the adherence of Gentiles. But in general the Judaism of the time insisted on its exclusive food-laws and its difficult initiatory rites.

It was a revolutionary experience when through his Jewish friends he met the followers of a new Way, which was as yet still inside Judaism. Certain Jewish

people from Cyprus and from Cyrene who had settled in Antioch told him of events which they had witnessed in Jerusalem as tragic as the myth of Adonis but true; the story of Jesus. Like the synagogue leaders they taught about the kingdom of God to come, but the kingdom they encouraged their hearers to look for was an ethical rather than a Jerusalem-centered one, and for all nations.

These followers of "the Way," as they called it, constituted a fellowship and a brotherhood, as the devotees of the mystery-religions did not. Their enthusiasm and effectiveness made him think of "the grace of God," as he himself puts it. "Great grace was on them all," he says of the early disciples, meaning not only courage and power, but also the touch of an unseen hand. The spirit of the followers of the Way embodied the exact opposite of the covetousness, the superstition and the cruelty which Luke hated. They were adventurous and sought to build a new world-order which they called "the kingdom of God"; but they knew that it had to begin with themselves. They had faith, confidence and drive. They were joyous and vital, and to Luke were attractive characters. He could see in their eyes what G. K. Chesterton called "the star of an unconquerable praise."

One of the leaders of the early church in Antioch was a magnetic and large-hearted man with a particular talent for interesting and befriending young men, Barnabas, "the son of consolation," or exhortation or persuasion. He had grown up in Cyprus, the island whose mountains are visible off-shore from the port of

Antioch. A Jew, he was related to, probably the nephew of, the woman who owned the large upper room where the disciples of Jesus had been accustomed to meet in Jerusalem. Almost alone he had taken the part of Paul when the latter became a Christian, looking him up in Tarsus and finding a place for him in Antioch in the employment of the church. Barnabas was the friend of young Greeks, and insisted that they could become Christians without undergoing the difficult and unpleasant initiatory rites of the synagogue, and have fellowship with the older Jewish disciples without keeping the Jewish food-laws.

Luke seems to refer to the three stages of his conversion in his phrasing of some words of Jesus which belong to the oldest strata, "Everyone that cometh to me, and heareth my words, and doeth them—." He came as an inquirer, interested in the magnetism, earnestness, and happy extroversion of these men, and decided that they had caught it from Jesus, who must have been a character of astonishing ability and attractiveness. He learned from them about the words which Jesus had spoken, many of which they knew by heart or had in writing, for they were only two hundred miles from Jerusalem and in close touch with it. These words were not only full of rich poetry but also offered an interpretation of the world and of human life better than anything he had heard before. For example, there was a prayer Jesus had taught, "Father, thy kingdom come." The new friends confronted him with ethical requirements such as the Greek religions had never offered and which were in keeping with the high-

est thought of Greek philosophy, in some ways beyond it. These teachings of Jesus searched his very soul. The words challenged him; to quote another convert of a few decades later whose thought traveled a pilgrimage like Luke's, Justin, the words of Jesus called him to conquer in his own life "the fear of magic arts, the lure of property, the flash of malice, and the downward pull of anxiety about his bodily needs," four temptations which give a vivid picture of that age. Luke realized that he must not only hear the words but resolve to do them. As we know, he made the venture of faith and began to walk in the new Way, offering his allegiance to the historic Jesus, crucified only a few years before. He found it a satisfying experience. It turned his thoughts away from himself towards action. Further, he seems to have had some moment of insight, some achievement of throbbing excitement, some "receiving of the holy Spirit," as he calls it when he speaks of others, for he describes it so often for others that he must write from first-hand knowledge.

A fifth step followed; on his Christian knowledge and purpose and experience, he "grafted," to use Fletcher Brockman's phrase, the values he had known before he became a Christian—a Greek sense of the immanence of God; a feeling of the immense pathos of the tragic death of the Master; a yearning for redemption and deliverance; a sense of reverence and awe. Adonis was no longer his hero, but the One who had gone about doing good. The new Way bound together, into one passion, the scattered elements of his many longings: for personal completion; for a promise of life

after death; for an explanation of the universe; for active compassion towards the wounded and the common people and the villagers; for a hope of a redeemed society, for a personal leader, master, "savior." We can understand the integration of personality it must have given him, his "first fine careless rapture."

That decision was in time to take him into missionary work, and perhaps immediately into preparation for medical work in the slums of Antioch. The new faith was to take the place of wife and home, yet to keep him, without these normal privileges, in happiness and without introspective diffidence. He had heard the imperious call of God, greater than the call of conscience, which a man can never quite forget. He was to go to strange cities where he would have no place to lay his head, yet to have an inner serenity which the years could not shake. No wonder he was to call Jesus "the pioneer of life." The fascinating beauty and moral depth of that compelling Personality is the strongest reason why many earnest spirits in his age were drawn to Christianity.⁵

The Christians who met in Antioch made up a fellowship, he tells us, of happy and magnetic people. The leaders included not only Barnabas but also other remarkable men. One was Manaen, an elderly gentleman from Italy, of Jewish stock from his name, who had been brought up in high circles among the well-to-do in Rome with the royal-blooded Herod family. There was another Lucius whom Luke designates as

⁵ Angus, S., *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, p. 275.

of Cyrene in Africa in distinction from himself. Paul, too, was there, brought to Antioch by Barnabas, and put on salary as a teacher. Titus, a young Greek, whom Luke never mentions but whose career often crossed his own, was another. They drew into their circle a "great number" of Greeks (Acts 12:21 evidently means Greeks and not Grecian Jews). Luke probably intends that to include himself. They had social passion and the creative spirit which he admired, without the exclusiveness or retreat from reality of the mysteries. The mysteries held their truths exclusively for the initiated and refused their secrets to all others. The followers of the Way kept nothing secret. They relied less on rank or pivotal importance than on earnestness, inner effectiveness and character. They purposed to know no distinction of class, even between slave and free man. They took their stand early that the Way was not to be kept for either Greek or Jew alone. Luke mentions Simeon Niger among the half-dozen greatest leaders, a token of the willingness of the circle to avoid race distinctions. This inclusiveness became one of the forces which drew the Roman world to prefer Christ to Dionysus or to Mithra.

The Christians seem also to have kept their friendly relationships with Judaism until past the middle of the century, and they still regarded themselves as part of that historic religion. That implies a large degree of tolerance on both sides. The friendliness which Paul and Barnabas expected to find in the synagogues on the island of Cyprus and elsewhere indicates that there had been no decisive cleavage from the synagogue in

Antioch. The church in Antioch, although it still regarded itself as part of Judaism, however, as Paul tells us in Galatians, ignored in whole or in part the strict requirements against eating with Gentiles. That is, it admitted converts who had neither undergone the difficult initiatory rites of Judaism nor followed its food-laws, and therefore its members suspended the food-laws for themselves for the sake of fellowship. It opened the door wide for the Greeks to enter. Luke grew up in an atmosphere which took tolerance for granted. In his writings there is hardly a word of insistence on freedom such as that which Paul was so emphatically to voice in Galatians when emissaries came from Jerusalem to Antioch.

The Christians appealed to Luke not only by their freedom from race prejudice and by their rejection of ritual exclusiveness but also by giving him responsibility. Hearing first-hand reports of the results of the depression in Palestine, they bought and sent a cargo of wheat down the coast, and Luke seems to have gone with it, as well as Barnabas, Paul, and Titus.⁶ The services of a polished and attractive young physician would be in demand at such a time. When he mentions the word "we," it is usually as the introduction to an expedition of some kind, and the phrase "when we were assembled" in the Cambridge manuscript of Acts 11:28, probably established as authentic by Professor Clark's work, indicates his presence. His graphic and humorous description of some of its adventures can

⁶ Acts 11:30, Gal. 2:2. A probable date is 43 A.D.

only have come from an eye-witness. His picture of a meeting which almost made a worse tragedy of Peter's escape from prison is unforgettable. The Christians met at night while Peter was under arrest, and prayed so earnestly, and perhaps with so little hope, that they did not hear him knocking at the gate, newly freed. When they finally let him in, he had to motion to them to end the hubbub. Then, highly excited, he told of being awakened from sleep in the prison and hearing a voice say "Get up quickly; gird thyself and put on thy sandals; wrap thy garment about thee and follow me." The local government next day put two soldiers to death for the occurrence. The story is full of life, humor, and tragedy, as if Luke had seen the incident himself.

If it is true, as we think, that Luke went with this expedition, the adventure would have a highly educational influence on him. In Palestine emaciated mothers and starved children, with badly swollen abdomens, begged for food with open palms. They noted an entire absence of babies under two years of age; young children die first in famines. They talked with anxious-faced fathers hanging around market places looking for jobs. They observed yellow-skinned lads and girls, undernourished and diseased, hardly able to drag one foot after another, but not surrendering. They were amazed that people were silent and did not complain as they faced hunger and bereavement, a strange way which human nature has in famine time. A careless observer passing through the city might have thought that little was amiss. But Luke listened to the talk of those who had been small farmers and had lost their

land because unable to pay back small loans. He heard peasants mutter protests about rents which drained the country of its reserves and went to support luxurious magnates far away. He realized that public agencies were entirely unready either there or at the administrative capitals to handle emergencies. Sympathy for "those who weep now" kindled into pity, and perhaps into indignation against the blindness of "rich" ones who deliberately shut their eyes to human sufferings.

It may well be that there a purpose like that of Barnabas was born then in his mind, to be a missionary, and to go about doing good, helping all who were oppressed, and speaking good tidings of the possibility of the Kingdom of God.

Luke never could quite explain how he and a handful of others had stumbled on so great a discovery as the knowledge of Jesus. He kept repeating in later years when he wrote of others' conversions that such experiences must have been planned, that people had really been "guided," that it was the Lord who had added to the Church daily such as were to be saved. Just as Francis Thompson felt that he had been followed by the Hound of Heaven, so Luke was certain that he had not become a follower of his own ability; he and others had been sought out by God.

It was a great day when this man became a Christian, with his inquiring mind, his sense of wonder, his radiant humor and joy, his sympathy for foreigners, for women, for the common people, and for slaves. No ordinary movement could have won him so completely. His conversion was another of the notable triumphs of the spirit of Jesus.



III

Medicine

THE main, though not the only, evidence that Luke took up the practice of medicine is Paul's statement that Luke the beloved physician was with him and sent greetings to his old friends in the church at Colossae. It is necessary for us to be sure that Paul's friend the physician is also the author of the Gospel and of Acts. The identification rests largely on the "we" passages in Acts.¹ The author of Acts is too careful a writer to have retained those passages by accident. He was evidently a companion of Paul, and no one so well fits Paul's description. We think of the young man of Antioch, then, as studying medicine.

The medical profession in the first century was in a bad way. Physicians then were often ignorant men and mere money-makers. Medicine had swung away from the earlier standards set by the great Hippocrates, and also had neglected some of his science. Even in Rome the most fashionable physician of the years before Luke's time, Asklepiades, had slipped into what Dr. Brock calls "mechanicalism," treating living tissue as a dead machine. Judged from our modern stand-

¹ Acts 16:10-17, 20:5-21:18, 27:1, 28:16. Harnack, and more recently the late Professor J. H. Ropes, thought the case well proven. Acts 11:28 is also supported by Professor A. E. Clark.

point, first century medicine was behind that of four centuries before.² In Luke's own time there were famous medicine men—Simon Magus in Samaria, Elymas in Cyprus, the “vagabond Jewish exorcists” of Ephesus, and the seven sons of Sceva. They all appealed to ignorance and superstition. Even as late as 168 A.D., the great Galen found the quack doctors in Rome strongly entrenched, who hounded him until he left his practice and turned to writing books. Medicine was not the inviting field that it is today to a young idealist, and when Luke was a young man he may have hesitated to adopt it.

What choice of life work was Luke, the young Greek of cultured family, to make? He had the abilities and tastes of an artist, and his cultural training equipped him for literature. Of his literary skill there is no question, for two of his works, or rather one of his works in two volumes—the Gospel and the Acts—is still before us. He wrote so well that many consider these two volumes the most interesting book in the world. He could not only tell a story well, but he knew how to handle sources accurately, like a good historian. He was “a consummate literary artist,” a “professional writer.”³ He was like a Japanese painter in his ability to eliminate all details save those which add to his few focal points. He had a Greek sense of balance and proportion which shows itself again and again, particularly in Acts. Such skill does not come without long struggle and much experience in writing. It is a tragedy that no

² Brock, F. J., *Galen*, (Loeb classics), p. xvii.

³ Streeter, B. H., *The Four Gospels*, p. 548.

more of Luke's work has survived; during persecutions people did not find time even to mention his other writings. Literature, however, was not until a long time later to be Luke's chosen profession.

Travel undoubtedly interested him, and his interest in it might have suggested that he seek a government position. One often catches phrases in Acts which make one sure that Luke loved geography as a chosen subject. Probably he had studied Strabo's many-volumed geography and had access to it when he lived in Palestine or Rome. He makes few or no mistakes about places and boundaries. A few geographical names are tinted with rose as if they were places of desire which he had longed to visit. "They assayed to go into Bithynia" is a haunting phrase.

Medicine, however, was the profession on which he fixed. Whether it was his family who chose for him, as later Galen's family in Pergamos were to choose for him, we do not know.

The education of a Greek lad was primarily from his contact in his own home, then with the city, and only after that from his teacher, says T. R. Glover.⁴ Luke learned about life from discussions and play and observation in Antioch. Then, if he followed the usual practice, he went before his 'teens to a teacher who taught him how to read and write and opened the treasures of the past to him. What they called music included mathematics as well as literary and artistic culture; and what they called gymnastics meant indi-

⁴ Glover, T. R., *The World of the New Testament*.

vidual training in hand-work and coordination rather than organized games. Greek schools were newer inventions of the Hellenistic period, and the old Greek word school had meant leisure time. They were only beginning to standardize education. The Greek spirit had been that of free inquiry; it taught boys to love beauty, and it was creative. The lad learned how to handle words well. When he made a speech, he did it with a flourish. There is a tradition that he learned to handle colors and paint-brushes, but it cannot be traced to an early date.

In his upper 'teens—that is, about the time Josephus was born in the year 37 A.D., when Paul had returned from Arabia and was in Tarsus, and when Peter and James and John were leading the church in Jerusalem—the young man may be supposed to have launched into his pre-medical course. It meant studying the liberal arts. Galen, over a hundred years later, had to study Plato, Aristotle, the Stoicks, and the Epicureans.

Then the student entered his medical courses proper. Medicine at its best was still under the influence of Hippocrates of the Island of Cos and of Athens, who had founded the science four hundred years before. Even today at least thirteen genuine books of his are extant. One of them contains the first enunciation of public health. Others treated of fractures, surgery, head injuries, acute diseases and epidemics. The theory which he expounded was of the healing power of nature, a doctrine still orthodox, and which fits in well with Luke's own belief in the healing power of God. The medical student learned him by heart. The student

also learned a *materia medica* which included herbs from the Orient, balsam from Jericho, an eye-ointment from Pergamos (mentioned in Revelation), oils and ointments for wounds, and alcohol as a disinfectant—the oil and wine of Luke's parable. The prospective medical man was taught how to set bones, practise some surgery, and to use hot fomentations. Everybody believed that diseases were caused by demons, some of which could be exorcised by hot water, or by pouring strong wine into wounds.

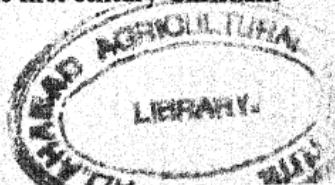
Then the young physician took an internship at one of the great temples of Asklepios, which really were sanatoria, somewhat like European health resorts. He learned how to prescribe fresh air, water cures, massage and gymnastics, and to use psycho-therapy.

Sometimes young surgeons seeking experience took terms of service in the great gladiatorial amphitheaters, which, to Rome's everlasting discredit, were to be found all over the empire. Unfortunate country lads, taken prisoner in border wars, and brought from far-away Scotland or Germany or Persia, were avalanched into training quarters under the arenas. Such shows were already an institution of three hundred years' standing. In the city of Beirut in Luke's own time and province, seven hundred pairs of men had been set to murder one another on a single day with sword or spear. The emperor, it was creditably reported, liked to see the contortions of a dying man. In Antioch the ruins of the amphitheater are still to be seen on the hill. If Luke's education was like Galen's, he ministered to wounded gladiators. The system was horribly cruel and must

have been utterly repugnant to one who later chose to record: "The Most High is kind; be ye therefore merciful." Yet he saw fortitude and endurance there, and when the time came for him to tell about the tortures of Jesus on the cross, he wrote only about victory and courage.

The young man was well fitted to be a physician. He was a happy character, and his sense of humor, as we know through his writings, bubbles out again and again. It shows itself in the many incongruous pictures which his later writing suggests. One of them is of young Eutychus at Troy falling out of a third-story window during Paul's long talk, which lasted until midnight. Fortunately, he was not seriously injured, but be sure that Paul never heard the end of that! Luke may have had a twinkling eye when he wrote of Tertullus, the orator, saying to the notoriously incompetent Felix, "By thee we enjoy unbroken peace." Luke reflects his own spirit in speaking often about joy and gladness, good tidings, the spirit rejoicing, people glorifying and praising God, and so on throughout the Gospel and Acts. Only an incorrigible optimist could ever describe John the Baptist's savage attacks on corruption as "good news." No wonder people loved Luke and called him "beloved."

Then he may have had some practice in the city, whose poorer quarters must have had thousands of people almost without medical care. Perhaps in such surroundings he had met the Christians, for Barnabas had, he tells us, the spirit of the first century Christians



of Palestine, and was generous and active in helping those in need.

Luke as a physician was attracted to Jesus as a healer of people's bodies as well as spirits. In his writings he puts some of his own emotion into the story of Jesus' message to John the Baptist, that the blind could see, the deaf hear, and the lame walk, and that the poor were having good tidings preached unto them. He had not at that time read Mark's Gospel with its many accounts of Jesus' healings, but he would have approved what a later medical writer was to say, "Jesus is like an excellent physician who examines what is repulsive, handles ulcers, and reaps pain for himself from the sufferings of others,"⁵ and the prayer found a few years ago on an inscription at Timgad, "Come, O Christ, thou only healer." In the Gospel and Acts Luke is later to mention thirty-four cases of healing. Of these twenty-four are by Jesus, four by Peter, and six by Paul. He shows no signs whatever of accepting Paul's belief that the body is naturally evil. To him, care of the human body is a part of the responsibility of religion. Let no follower of Jesus, he seems to say, neglect such things as the health of those for whom the Lord gave himself, or housing, or environment, or earning capacity, or share in the value which society creates. Luke's own age was callous about human suffering; Luke mentions the contemporary hardness of heart and dullness of understanding. The age which allowed gladiatorial murder and slavery and wars and killing of unwanted

⁵ Pseudo-Hippocrates, quoted in Angus, S., *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, p. 308.

babies must have been startled at the stories which the Christians told of Jesus healing the sick and caring for people's physical needs. Even today those stories search our hearts. Who can think of blind men of our day living below the border-line of earning capacity and physical comfort and then read of Jesus "having mercy" on the blind man at Jericho without a sense of things left undone?

Logically a man who cares about people's bodies will also be led to concern himself with other social factors which contribute to bodily welfare. Luke, as he reveals, was greatly interested in human environment. Superstition, cruelty, social injustice, he thought of as God's enemies and his, as well as sickness and ignorance. When the time came for him to write, he showed his sadness of heart at slave-owners making profits out of a slave-girl's infirmities, objecting to her being healed; at merchants who maintained profits even at the cost of spreading superstition; at magistrates who perverted justice to get popularity; and, in the Gospel, at leaders in Palestine who even then were ready to raise the shouts of hate and fear which were bound to lead to war. Here is a social passion and discernment which amazes us. Let no one think that this first century Christian was without social vision. With other followers of the Way, he believed in a kingdom of God already begun on earth.

At this point we are confronted by the significant fact that another passion took possession of Luke's mind, took him from medicine, and made him a teaching missionary. Whether it was dissatisfaction with

medical customs of his day, like that which was to turn Galen to writing, or whether it was a growing experience of the practical effects on the "demon-possessed" of the joy and faith of the Way, we do not know. Evidently not abandoning medicine, he became also a teacher, as he is to tell us in his account of what happened to him and to Paul at Troas. It is no disparagement of the medical profession to point out that Luke in his day came to feel that the most important thing which he could do was to teach men and women how to live. He thought that to give people courage and confidence in the universe and in God was the most important contribution which he could make. So Schweitzer and Grenfell of our generation have acted. First in Antioch, and then, in the year 49 A.D., in Troas, he was a teacher of the gospel. He did not give up being a physician. Later, on the island of Malta on the way to Rome, we are to find him still practicing medicine.

To anticipate some later facts about Luke's attitude to medicine, it is to be noted that in the fifties when he was writing *Acts*, he endorsed both Paul and Peter as reputable healers, although they were not trained physicians at all. Perhaps this is a sign of some revolt against the crudities of the medical profession of his time. He recorded that Paul was the means by which the slave-girl at Philippi found a cure, and by which sick folk in Ephesus were freed of their diseases. He believed that there were cases when Peter and Paul brought the power of God to the sick and so conquered the demons which possessed them. We would put it

that there were cases where a sense of the presence of God and a dependence on the healing power of nature were more important than drugs. As we have seen, Hippocrates had already emphasized the healing power of nature, and Galen, one of the greatest of physicians, was also to revolt, in his book, *The Natural Faculties*, against mechanistic theories in Roman medicine.

We are to note later that Luke's Gospel, as is well known, is woven of at least three strands. The Bible student finds to his surprise that in Luke's own special source, the so-called "L" source, there are accounts of only four healings—the widow's son at Nain, the crippled woman, the man with the dropsy, and the ten lepers, besides a general statement that Jesus healed many of diseases, plagues, blindness and evil spirits. The more familiar healings are all copied from Mark, his other source. They include the man in the synagogue, Simon's wife's mother, the sick at evening, the leper, the paralytic borne of four, the man with the withered hand, the Gerasene demoniac, the woman with the issue of blood, Jairus' daughter, the epileptic boy, the blind man at Jericho, and some others. The amazing fact is that Luke gathered less material than Mark about healing. The Greeks said, "Asklepios is the greatest lover of men," but Luke knew better: Jesus was that. There was in Luke's mind something more important about Jesus than his care for the human body—Jesus's power to purify and raise people's inner motives and give courage and life.

But when Luke, long after his Antioch days, and when he had reached Rome, read the stories in Mark

about Jesus's healings, he took them and used them. It was in this period of the late fifties and early sixties that he treated Paul medically in Caesarea, practiced medicine on Malta, and was Paul's physician in Rome. In fact, it is only in relation to this period that we have our direct evidence that Luke practiced medicine at all.

When he was writing his story of Jesus's life, he must have had at least one uncomfortable moment. He had received, as we believe, a copy of Mark's Gospel and decided to use parts of it to round out his account of Jesus. So, giving credit in the usual way of his age, he copied out Mark's facts carefully, assimilating the words to his style. But he came to the following passage in Mark which could not have been a pleasant dose:

And a certain woman had suffered many things of many physicians and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. When she heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind and touched his garment.

Luke had a sense of humor, which in Acts is noticeable again and again, and he retained the words. He made the passage read that she "spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed of any." That was fairer, for the physicians of that earlier generation had probably done their best.

The language which Luke used has been thought by Mr. Hobart in the 1870's, by Professor Harnack in his book *Luke the Physician*, and by others, to include many words which only a physician would use. Professor Cadbury, however, has shown that a large part of the list of words was also used in Luke's age by

non-medical people. Of course Dr. Grenfell and Dr. Schweitzer and other literary physicians do not use technical medical words when they write, and Luke was an artist. There is at least no argument from language that the author was not a physician. The man who put the parable of the Good Samaritan in literary form knew how wounds ought to be treated. The one who wrote the parable of Dives, the hardened rich man, was shocked as a sensitive physician would be, that Dives had let the dogs lick the ulcers of Lazarus lying at his door.

To sum up: the compelling interests of Luke's youth seem to have been these four: love of clear words to express beautiful ideas, fondness for travel in order to find what is beyond the horizon, interest in medicine in order to cure people's bodies, and an earnest ethical desire to make wholesome the under-current of people's lives. When in time his dreams and ambitions are to come crashing down to the ground with the turning of the authorities against the Way, he is to use all these earlier interests and with them rise above the ruin of his hopes, to write the volumes which mark him as one of the great characters of the great first century.

The Antioch Band of Knights Errant

WHEN he wrote the Acts Luke had no intention of telling his own story, for he was writing towards a definite and very pressing purpose which crowded his own career out of the narrative. We reconstruct his story only by inference, and it is therefore to be taken in its details with caution. About his own work in Antioch he says practically nothing, and all his statements about that city are highly condensed.

Luke gives a vivid picture of the church which had trained him. Later when he came to write about the friends in Antioch he found his pen vibrating with emotion. How missionary-minded they had been, how generous, and how well-led! In the midst of a thrilling conflict of ideas, Greek, Syrian, Hebrew, they had had something to say. A super-normal grace had been on them, something communicated to the whole society, they were sure, through their contact with a living source, "the Spirit," and through the presence of their risen "Lord." The first century Christians had discovered a simple but creative technique of living. They called their manner of life "the Way" as the followers of Gautama had done before them. Each day, begun with the thought of a guiding and power-giving Spirit, was an adventure, an opportunity to help some other

personality by the power of the Name, something which itself justified one for having lived. One day a slave might be given a new idea which would change the whole picture for him. Another day a jailer might be helped to see possibilities for himself of which he had not yet dreamed. They "out-lived" the pagans, as Glover says, rather than out-talked them. No wonder young people listened. Among them Luke learned the stern discipline which enabled him, when the call came, to meet the high standards required for traveling in Paul's company.

Out of Antioch there operated a band of powerful spirits—Paul, Barnabas, Silas, with the Latin name Silvanus, John bar-Miriam who had taken the Latin name Marcus, and Luke himself. A hundred stories at which we can only guess are hinted at in Acts and the early epistles: "Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch"; "and took Titus with me also"; "men of Cyprus and Cyrene"; "Herodion, Andronicus and Junias, Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen" (that is, Paul's "fellow-countrymen" from the province of Syria-Cilicia); and many others.

Over the horizon from Antioch, beyond the mountains in the north, were a thousand villages, a hundred cities, and a few Roman colonies whose residents spoke Latin. Beyond was Bithynia. Just as the smoke of a thousand villages on the table-lands in the north lured David Livingstone from the African coast, so Luke was stirred when he thought of the thriving, yearning cities of the north. Looking westward from the harbor on clear days he had sometimes seen an island, Cyprus

the beautiful. When Barnabas and Paul and Mark sailed to Cyprus, the book of Acts gives the impression that Luke went along.¹ We have no clear statement from him, no "we" passage which so frequently precedes a sea-voyage in Acts, and we are not sure. With that voyage they found the "Way" to be a sea-lane as well as a road on land, and the Mediterranean became part of the highway prepared for the Christian God. They went to Cyprus because of Barnabas's statesman-like vision. Luke, writing about it, either from what he gathered when they returned or from his own observation, records the winning of the greatest Roman official on the island, Lucius Sergius Paulus. From that point on he deliberately calls his hero by the name Paulus, instead of the Hebrew one, as if Paul had there resolved to devote himself thenceforth to Romans and to Greeks. The expedition went much farther than planned, partly because on the mainland north of Cyprus it struck a malarial region and had to swing into the mountains. That was the time when Mark dropped out; years later when Luke is to complete Acts he will not have forgiven Mark but will leave an unmistakably caustic description of him as one "who went not with them to the work." They went through Galatia, making many friends, some converts, and some enemies. In Lystra they met Timothy, and Paul was stoned. They retraced their steps, organizing their converts into churches, and returned to Antioch. From the latter, Paul wrote his epistle to the Galatians, a letter with which Luke evi-

¹ Bartlett, J. V., *The Acts*.

dently had no acquaintance, and which may owe its preservation to the great interest created in Paul by Luke's circulating the Acts.²

About the "second missionary journey" the narrative in Acts is very definite. Luke had started on foot from Antioch as a base and probably planned to go to Bithynia, an interesting and promising province just south of the Dardanelles, and a progressive and inviting field of work. The way being blocked, perhaps by government order, he turned to Troas on the coast a little off the main road.³ It was an historic seaport, the Troy of Hector and of the wooden horse, an easy run by sea from the even more famous province of Macedonia, across the north corner of the Aegean. He made friends there, including, as we have intimated, a young man called Eutychus, about whom he was later to tell that story near the tragic but with its point of humor. One day as he worked among the followers of the Way, as teacher rather than physician, there came swinging into the city his radiant and stalwart friend of Antioch days, none less than Paul himself. With him were Silas, who also had worked with them in Antioch, and a congenial man from Galatia of about his own age or slightly younger, named Timothy. They had come by land and had, like himself, been blocked from entering Bithynia. A few days later, as they dispatched their

² Goodspeed, E. J., *Some Problems of the New Testament*.

³ Luke had no doubt equipped himself to be a missionary. As a physician in his day armed himself with the aphorisms of Hippocrates for the reassuring of his patients (Jones, W. H. S., note in Hippocrates, Loeb classics, Vol. 2, p. 26), so Luke may reasonably be expected to have furnished himself with the words of Jesus. The Greek mind liked pithy sayings.

morning fruit, Paul surprised them by telling of a dream, or a burst of insight, which he had experienced in the night, the famous vision of the man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." Luke was child of his own century enough to believe in visions. The vision of a consecrated person like Paul was serious; Luke was impressed. To him such an insight seemed to have a deeper meaning. So we read in Luke's writings the following, "And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." The most important word in that crucial sentence is perhaps "we." Always careful in use of words, he must have deliberately intended to inform people that he was a participant in the adventure. The "endeavor" was an attempt to find a ship. He says also that he felt called to "preach the gospel unto them." Since he could not expect to enter on such work without having had previous preparation, he must have had a background which had prepared him for such work. The episode at Troas points us both backwards and forwards.

In our study of Luke's earlier years we have been without certainty on many points, and therefore have kept clear the distinction between fact and inference. For a period of about twelve years, from the years 49 to 61 of the first century, we are on solid ground. The testimony is that of an eye-witness. There is no mistaking the thrill which makes Luke's pen quiver as he writes of the way in which, following Paul's vision, they broke across the northern Aegean and came

to Europe. People in his day were less aware than we are of the separating line along the Aegean, the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, but Hellas was to a Greek like Luke the most important place on earth. They had wanted to go to a rich, cultured, prosperous part of Asia Minor. But Luke first apparently, and Paul later, had been guided elsewhere; "they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." He was sure the Spirit of Jesus was guiding them, going on before. The Christ of Luke's thought was in the prow of the boat calling his followers on.

They got into danger in Europe. In the first Macedonian city they clashed with ignorance, cruelty and greed. In Philippi one morning, as they went through the city streets they saw a slave girl who had been goaded by her owners to shout at people until she had worked herself into a frenzy. Then she told fortunes, from which of course they took the proceeds. Thousands of tender-hearted people had passed by and had never noticed, or if they did had thought, "We can't do anything about it." But these men, ready for an adventure, got her story, brought her back to sanity, cured her. Then naturally they got into trouble. The slave-owners were impervious to their appeal and dragged Paul and Silas to the magistrate and so to prison. The police of this Roman colony carried fasces, or bundles of rods tied to their axes, as our ten-cent pieces show, and the beating they gave left the two prisoners bruised and bleeding. Luke and Timothy seem to have escaped it. This was Paul's third Roman beating, so far as we can tell from Acts and Second

Corinthians, in addition to five in the Jewish courts. The tactics of love and non-violence and education to which the Christians were committed had failed to protect them.

Luke gives a vivid picture of the two brave spirits, Paul and Silas, with their wounded backs. They were hospital cases, yet were treated cruelly by the jail-warden, who was probably an ex-soldier, for he lived in a city of veterans. "In the inner prison, their feet fast in the stocks, and at midnight" they kept themselves from anger, and met the pain and weakness and cramped position by singing hymns in the night. It reminds one of Luke's account of Jesus on the cross; Luke had seen people endure physical agony bravely, and he calls attention to the way in which the Christians bore it. Their courage, their avoidance of bitterness, and their willingness to help the warden, after the earthquake which came that night, had a part in winning him over. In the dawn of the morning, "he was baptized, he and all his, immediately, having believed in God." People with a social message like theirs were under suspicion in that city of army veterans.

But they did not abandon their method, and it scored a series of marked successes. Some others they helped directly, and still others responded to their teaching about the kingdom, and about Jesus, and about the "risen" life in fellowship with him. In three important cities—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea—they drew the believers together into societies which very soon became generous and influential. Many of the people about whom Luke writes and to whom he spoke his

missionary messages were probably much like those for whom he wrote later. They were ready to laugh with him at sordidness, and to feel indignation at injustice. They were morally earnest people, eager for a better social order. Not many mighty were among them, although there were some of that kind, but they were extraordinarily capable and in earnest.

Later, Luke must have rubbed his eyes at the favorable way in which things broke for them in Corinth. They drew to the Way, and into the fellowship of followers whom they organized there, two successive presidents of the important synagogue, and also the city treasurer, as well as many other creative minds, both laborers and intellectuals. Most important of all, in Luke's perspective, was winning a decisive case establishing civil liberty. To Luke, it was a turning point in the course of religion, and he hoped that the future would hinge on it. We, looking back, know that history was to follow its own way, and that a calamity of which he never dreamed was coming, Nero's persecution of the Christians. Luke's account throbs with happiness and pride. The case against Paul was a criminal one. He faced the charge that the religion which he taught was not the Hebrew faith at all, but a new, unrecognized, and illicit religion. The decision was from one of the most distinguished judges and officials of the time, Junius Annaeus Gallio, adopted son of a famous lecturer, Gallio, whose family name he had received. His younger brother, Seneca, who kept their own father's name, was the tutor of the emperor's step-son, a young man named Nero. Gallio's decision

was that legally there was no important difference between Jews and Christians, and that they were entitled to all the privileges of teachers of a recognized religion. The decision meant that the Christians were to have liberty of conscience and the rights of free exercise of their religion. They were to possess the right to assemble in meetings to worship, to teach their children, and to win converts.

The coming of Gallio to Corinth is the one fixed date from which we figure backwards and forwards: it was in the summer of 51 A.D., so that the year 49 is the one in which they had crossed into Macedonia.

When they reached Ephesus, Paul and his companions were important figures. What happened in the early years there is a puzzle, for Luke has omitted, we think of political necessity, a whole incident from the record of events. But we have some of Paul's letters written during their two and a half years there, and another short one sent back to the church there in 56.⁴ From these other records we know that Paul suffered an arrest in Ephesus and an imprisonment, and possibly faced a sentence to fight with wild beasts. Some of the friends there had to risk their necks for his sake, but he was released and allowed to continue work. The release indicates that the Roman governor, Silanus, had heard the case and made another ruling like Gallio's and ordered an acquittal.⁵ However, the friendly Roman governor was a possible claimant in line to succeed the emperor Claudius. And when, in their sec-

⁴ Romans 16. In it Luke sent his greetings.

⁵ Duncan, G. S., *Paul's Ephesian Ministry*.

ond year, Claudius died, Nero, his step-son, seized the throne, and the gracious and friendly governor was murdered by poison as a rival. No wonder Luke is silent about it as he writes for Nero's own friends and in Nero's own time. They were skating on thin ice and in constant danger. Nevertheless, their effectiveness amazed even themselves. The results were sensational and lasting. These Christians were elevating the whole population. They were definitely lifting people out of superstition and its degradation into courage and faith.

In Ephesus they encountered another immense obstacle which had to be climbed before the Way could become a sufficient expression of the mind of Jesus and an adequate religion for later times. The obstacle was that at which Luke often hints—the uncontrolled profit system. The silver trade had grown into an important industry in Ephesus. A large part of its product was the manufacture of silver shrines of the patron goddess of the city. This industry imported silver from Spain and Germany and worked it into shapes like the shrine for the famous meteorite of the city. Under the new teaching about God as Spirit, when the sale of idols fell off rapidly, men of the silver industry turned on the Christian teachers bitterly. A silversmith named Demetrius led a riot in the fall of 54, and, as Luke tells us, camouflaged the attack by an appeal to religious loyalty. The Christians were within their legal rights, but men of the new imperial administration controlled the city. Paul and his company had to abandon their promising work suddenly, Paul writing at the time, "I was

crushed; I despaired of life; I told myself it was the sentence of death. But God rescued me from so terrible a death." They broke away quickly to Macedonia on foot, evidently making a narrow escape. The victory was with the industry, but the Way had surmounted a great mountain. The Church was learning the social implications of its own message.

Leaving Ephesus meant that the work which Luke had been carrying on at Colossae, about sixty miles inland, had also to be abandoned. Luke never mentions it, but Paul is to tell of it soon in two letters bearing Luke's greetings to his friends, Philemon, Apphia and Archippus.

The escape from Ephesus and Colossae to Macedonia was a defeat to their work. But they had a plan in reserve—an effort to build defences, so to speak, in Jerusalem and unite the conservative wing of the followers of the Way with the liberals of the Gentile churches who had dispensed with the initiation rites and food-laws. The plan was to raise a "collection" of money in the new churches to parallel the payments which went from Jewish homes all over the world to maintain the Temple in Jerusalem, and, indirectly, to support Jerusalem as well. As they spent a period of an unnamed number of months in Macedonia, Luke may have been the "brother" whom Paul mentions in Corinthians as visiting the churches and sharing in the work of collecting. At this time also, they probably began the work in Illyricum, west of Macedonia, of which Paul wrote a few months later. This was the seventh

province into which he and his associates had carried their work.

There followed three months in "Hellas," as Luke calls it, the only time that he uses the word. During this period, while Paul was writing, Luke may have prepared his notes and laid the foundation of what was to be the latter part of the *Acts*.

These years, from 43 to 56 A.D., had been highly creative ones, of immense importance for the human race. Paul wrote the earliest epistles: *Galatians*; *First and Second Thessalonians*; the four epistles preserved in *First and Second Corinthians*; *Romans*, from Corinth.⁶ In Palestine other Christians were teaching and preparing material out of which the epistle of James and part of the *Gospels* grew. In the northeastern arc of the Mediterranean basin, vital, forceful and moderately large societies of remarkable first century Christians were springing up, attracting people intelligent and religious enough to draw from Paul so deep a book as the epistle to the *Romans*.

As Luke looked back on those thirteen years, with their immense accomplishments, he must have marvelled at what this little Antioch band had done. Its members had established vital and rapidly growing societies in important places in seven provinces. They

⁶ That the Corinthian church preserved "*Romans*" is probable, if *Romans 16* went, as we think, to a different destination, the church of Ephesus. Tertius the stenographer evidently copied both epistles on one papyrus. That church also preserved Paul's epistles to them, which came from different cities; part of the lost first epistle may be in *2 Corinthians 6*; *2 Corinthians 10-13* is probably the body of the third letter; and *2 Corinthians 1-9* the fourth. The Corinthian church began the N. T. canon.

had changed the atmosphere and spirit of no less than twelve great cities. They had travelled constantly across a territory twelve hundred miles east and west, and five hundred miles north and south. They had influenced the thinking of the people who set the intellectual pace for the world. They had won liberty of speech in the courts. They had come face to face with three of the four or five greatest enemies which Christianity ever had to face—superstition, slavery, and that selfish profit-making which, having grown harmful to human welfare, yet refuses to move aside. Although they had lost those fights, they had made the issue clear. They had shown, for that generation at least, the practicability of the method of non-violence as a social force. The thorough-going quality of their goodness, the joyfulness of their spirit, the sanity and attractiveness of their beliefs, their strength, because of unseen resources, under suffering, enabled those first century Christians to move the world of their day.

They had faced death often without thinking much about it. Everyone in war knows that once a man makes up his mind about it and has found a controlling purpose, death loses its fears—in one's high moments anyhow. They seem to have had no fears of it and to have learned to give thanks every time that they survived, as if that had not been expected. One of Luke's favorite words is "patience," meaning steadfastness and ability to carry on. The results were so far beyond their prospects, the places so different from those to which they had expected to go, that he could only think of their success as coming from divine plan and

under divine guidance. The Spirit of Jesus had blocked them in one place and pushed them towards another. It was not their work alone; they had an unseen helper. They felt that people whom they had converted to Christianity had made the change not through human agency alone, but because they had been "ordained to eternal life."

This guidance, rather than a violent cataclysm in his own time, was Luke's idea of the intervention of God in human society. The kingdom of God was growing as leaven spreads, as he had probably read long before in the papyrus roll which held a collection of the sayings of Jesus. It was to go on spreading until the whole became leavened. The Roman empire must come under the reign of God. Salvation was a present possibility, the Spirit a reality, and Jesus the bringer of God's power into the world. It was a time when a new hope was abroad. So far as we know, hope never left Luke, and cynicism and bitterness never found a place.

So on a little ship, in the spring of 56, there sailed from Macedonia a deputation of nine men, to take the offering to Jerusalem which was to bind disciples in both west and east together. A letter from St. Paul at about that time says that he realized that "henceforth he had no more place in those parts," and as they reached Miletus, Paul summoned the Ephesian leaders and said good-bye to these friends who had toiled and wrought and thought with him. To the thunder and the sunshine, he and his associates had opposed free hearts and free foreheads, and their accomplished deed still stands as one of the vitally dramatic and important turns of history.

A Physician in Palestine

"THAT rosy light in the sky is peculiar to this country," one can imagine the physician saying from the ship's rail as a June night turned to morning in the year 56 A.D.; "I've seen nothing like it anywhere else in the world. It is said to be due to limestone dust." The little coaster had dropped anchor in the night after a few hours' run from Tyre, and passengers were on deck early to see the land and dawn. "Thou coverest the sky with light as with a garment," the poet had said centuries before. The words came to mind as they watched the rose lose itself in the deeper blue, while the details of the landscape grew clearer under the dawn, the line of surf, the white sand dunes, the dark trees, the green fields and the yellow plains. In the distance to the south they saw Mount Carmel, foreshortened and brown, rising out of the sea. All things upon it seemed tiny and insignificant. Even their busy chief had to take time to look at all this beauty. Paul, now in his fifties, was "full of grace," barrel-chested, sturdy, with large nose and heavy brows, according to an early description of him from Asia Minor.¹ From Luke we learn that his eyes were piercing and that he had a face

¹ *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, in Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. XVI.

so mobile that strangers sometimes thought him mercurial. In the Augustan Age of Rome many great individuals had been born, and Paul was one of the greatest.

Luke, the physician, had a store of anecdotes to share while their ship warped into the dock and tied up at the wharf. He entertained them with reminiscences from his experiences of thirteen years before. The chief and he had come on that occasion with a small cargo of wheat from Antioch for the sufferers in Jerusalem. That was at the time of the depression, when word had reached them that people were really famine-stricken. The wheat had to be transshipped, and the camels resented their heavy loads of four hundred pounds. In Jerusalem, the food had been badly needed and also his physician's medicines. There had been some illness and more might be expected, but mostly people needed nourishment. He believed in good food and plenty of it. "Things are tenser now," he added. "The city is hopelessly nationalistic and won't accept the *Pax Romana*. It is all irredentism in their minds. No one knows what will happen."

Things were so tense in Palestine that, after a long and tiring day's drive across the plain, with the Nazareth hills in sight part of the way, and over Carmel to Caesarea, to the administrative capital, they decided not to go at once to Jerusalem but to wait a few days and send ahead for information. Their hosts at Caesarea were Philip, a well-known man of the older generation, and his family. The physician, unmarried, always ready to get the feminine point of view, records that Philip

had four daughters, all unmarried and all "prophetesses"—that is, effective speakers in public. The women and their father probably had a fund of reliable and pointed anecdotes for him, and he had humorous, striking and serious things to tell about Antioch, Ephesus and the north. The father was a remarkable character; he had been the first, or at least the outstanding early follower of the Way, to break over into the Greek language from the vernacular Aramaic and to convert people in it. Even in the early days he had influenced and won a high official of Ethiopia. He was alarmed about the growing hatred between Jews and Syrian Greeks in Caesarea. Both parties were claiming too much and forgetting too little.

In spite of the tenseness of feeling and the warnings from well-informed friends that Jerusalem was worse than bitter against them and that they were in danger of physical violence, the members of the party were yet full of hope. They expected their project to moderate the friction and to bring some sort of agreement. They could hardly fail to understand that the crowd in that sacred mountain city had economic reasons for anger. People abroad who had turned Christian would no longer send up gifts to the Temple, and on such support a large part of the city's population depended. The city therefore seemed to fear and dread having Jews of the Greek cities relax the strictness of their racial barriers, and a large element was violent against foreigners. Yet Paul and Luke and others of the deputation in Caesarea were confident. They had had immense success in recent years. Almost everything that they

had attempted in the north had succeeded beyond expectation—their appeal to join the Way, their ability to influence the thinking people whom they met, their fight for civil liberties, and their efforts to raise this relief fund, the spending and possible repetition of which had brought them here. The new emperor, Nero, was likely to side with them, for the tolerant Seneca was his adviser. They hoped that they might be able to remove some of the bitterness of the Jewish community by compensating it for whatever loss they had caused the Temple treasury.

In a few days their old friend, Agabus, a name which suggests the modern name Hagop, brought them word from Jerusalem. He was a thoughtful and aggressive man who had proposed the relief expedition of thirteen years before. Conditions were even worse than they expected. People were wild against them, and particularly against Paul. The very mention of Paul's contacts with Gentiles angered them. Probably the populace would respect the Roman citizenship of most of the deputation, but the strategy would be to embroil Paul with the authorities as a dangerous character, by a riot if necessary. It was certain that, at the very best, there would be a hotly contested trial. Even Luke, who had watched Paul succeed in court after court in the past, joined in beseeching him not to go up to Jerusalem but to hand over the collection which the expedition had brought, and to depart. Paul was firm, however. He had taken bigger chances before and won. Their carefully planned and expensive gesture of renunciation would lose half of its effect and all chance of

being repeated if he turned now. Rather dramatically he asked, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not to be bound only but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

"Inshallah," was their answer, "the will of God be done." Nevertheless, they decided to spend the time of waiting in Caesarea until the Pentecost ceremonies were ready to begin, so that the chances of friction might be lessened.

When the time arrived and the carriages took them on the two-day journey to the village of Mnason, where they spent the night, and then creaked up into the mountains, and at last jogged along the narrow, high-crowned Roman road over the shoulder of Scopus, the nine passengers must have been deeply moved. It would have been beyond reason if some of them had not been nervous. But near the noon-hour in June the hot, gray, dust-covered roads near Jerusalem are deserted. The gray olive trees offer little shade, and people wait for the evening's coolness. So they passed only an occasional villager, walking with long steps behind his hurrying, dainty-footed donkey, and once they saw a flock of fat-tailed sheep with a hill-man on guard resting in the shade of a stone wall. They passed the new unfinished wall, the work on which the Romans had stopped, left the carriages, passed the gate in the old and inner wall, and made their way through the narrow streets, without, Luke tells us, their arrival being generally known. They found the "brethren" expecting them and not afraid to welcome them gladly,

a splendid lot of earnest leaders. In these Palestinian cities they found numbers of effective and creative people whom they could not help admiring. These Christian men were not only radiant, sincere, but they were cohesive, and their moral and spiritual vitality was contagious. Unfortunately they were a minority in the nation and so much under suspicion that they were isolated from any opportunity to determine national policies. The group in control included some young hotheads who believed in violence, as Josephus, twenty years old and in Jerusalem at that very time, makes clear.

The thirteen years since the last visit of Luke and Paul had brought great changes in Jerusalem. Peter was gone, and James and John, and Mary the mother of Mark. New right-wing leaders now guided the several thousands of people who "believed." But the leaders could not be blamed if many of the Christians were influenced by the tremendous pressure of public opinion. Things were hastening to a crisis, and obviously Palestine could not long go on as it was. There must be either a new readiness to work with the organized world, or else Palestine would surely slip over the precipice to revolt. Luke knew world affairs well enough to foresee what would happen, if it did revolt: marching armies, cruel defeat, and crushing destruction. Its short-sightedness was just as Jesus had described in his day; as in the days of Noah, people ate and drank and married and never thought of the deluge. Here was a nation with immensely capable racial stock, and a heritage of leadership which the world needed badly,

but hurrying to national suicide because it could not see beyond national boundaries. It was swept by a swirling current of party hate, ready to take the dagger, playing for the stake of control of Temple funds which loyal Hebrews across the world poured sacrificially into the city. He knew that the world could not afford to let them hold a spear against its heart.

The next morning they went to confer with the second James, the patriarch, head of the brethren, the younger brother of Jesus. He was about sixty years of age,² highly respected, fearless on behalf of the poor, careful of his words, and spoken of everywhere as a just man. Six years later he was to be mobbed, thrown from the cliff Golgotha, and stoned to death. More than a bit rigid, he once had been described by Paul as a "pillar" but certainly not a pillar of cloud and fire. They met him in the whitewashed room of a stone house not far from the great castle which Herod had built two generations before and which today still stands by the Jaffa Gate bearing the name Tower of David. James had gathered the elders there, and Paul presented the formal salutations of the dozen churches represented by his deputation. He told stirring incidents of doors entered, of Greek cities aroused, and of people yearning for the teaching which they could give. Then James, like an Oriental bishop today, responded with his counsel. The pressure on him was very heavy. Even among the believers, thousands were doubtful about Paul's movement, fearing lest it would encourage

² If we follow Ramsay's suggestion of setting the birth of Jesus in 8 B.C.

people to break away from old customs, and even to forsake Moses. It would be wise to placate them. Therefore, let Paul stay seven days more and (this was typically Oriental) sponsor four men, friends of James, who needed financial help in going through some Temple rites. It might allay fears and effect reconciliation. Agabus looked uneasy, but James not only advised it, he almost ordered it. So Paul, thinking about everybody except himself, and with the Roman courts behind him if it came to open disorder, made the fatal step of consenting. Yet had he not, we might not have had Luke's Gospel.

The point of view of Luke as he described the events which followed was that of a man who eagerly wanted those Hebrew leaders to accept the glorious opportunity which awaited them. A new day had arrived for the world, Luke obviously thought, in which races might mingle on equal terms, government be purged of corruption and put in the hands of just and enlightened men, fear and cruelty be removed from the minds of all peoples around the central sea, trade be lifted out of its mud-hole of profit-seeking, regardless of human welfare, and raised to a new purpose—the meeting of human needs; with religion supplying the purpose, the drive, and the spirit which would create and maintain these things. The world needed a high religion which would free it of its hate, greed, pride and sensuality; and teach it to think in ethical and spiritual terms instead of in national and geographical ones. The empire craved the leadership of a religious group which

would neither foolishly defy nor blindly support political and world organization but cooperate with it.

This was far from anti-Semitism. Luke had come to the Way, in earlier days in Antioch, through the synagogue. He felt a profound obligation to Judaism. He revered its laws as his own and its Scriptures as revealing divine truth from ancient times, and believed that legally the Christian movement was a part of Hebrew religion. But he wanted Judaism to become less exclusive in its spirit, and to put the emphasis on what its prophets, at their highest, had demanded—justice and love towards God. Jesus had asked for that very thing. Let them cease thinking in nationalistic terms and begin thinking of the mount of the Lord's house as a widespread and spiritual state of mind; stop trying to confine the Creator to nationalistic formulae and think of Him as the living, inspiring Father, and Lord of heaven and earth. Luke felt that if this were done, they would find the world hungry for what they had to offer. Then Jerusalem's teaching would set the world free. The Greek world needed vitally what the Hebrew prophets had taught: stewardship to God for all property; that the human race is under an obligation to be merciful rather than to scramble for the things which God has placed on earth; that we ought to be and may become spiritually minded rather than sensual. Thus Palestine would make its real contribution to the world. The Way meant the Hebrew religion set free of its passing and minor features. Gentile Christians still felt themselves part of the Jerusalem flock, al-

though they must have wondered sometimes if they were not ugly ducklings who did not quite belong.

The next seven days were anxious and uncomfortable for Paul's eight friends in the deputation. They were restless as they waited for him to complete the ceremonies of his votive offerings. To go near the Temple would be unwise and provocative, perhaps fatal. Luke did not mind the deprivation, for on a former visit he had seen its golden walls of limestone and its open, paved Temple area, serene on the flat mountain top. The Temple he might not go near, but the country around Jerusalem was intensely interesting. Bethlehem was only six miles away; the glare in June was trying, but before eight in the morning the road was lovely. The town of Bethany was only an hour's stiff climb across the Kedron canyon. From the top of Olivet he could look back on tree tops, white roofs, golden walls and the shining front of the Holy Place itself. Day by day they waited expectantly, as six days of the seven passed.

Then, crashing like a stroke of lightning, came the disaster, the extent of which Luke was not able to estimate even five years after, when he was finishing his book. Nor are we today able to describe all that happened.

The horrible thing which he had feared came to pass. The adventurous spirit who led them had stayed a day too long. The seven days were almost over when Paul was suddenly mobbed in the Temple area, because of a tragic and ironical misunderstanding. He was accused of doing the very thing he had been most careful to

avoid: bringing a Greek into the Temple. One of James' friends had been mistaken for Trophimus. Paul was beaten by the crowd and arrested by the competent and ever-watchful Roman guard. Riots against him had happened before. The local army officer, however, was afraid to release him; this was not Philippi nor Corinth. Then the son of Paul's sister brought word that forty men had vowed not to eat or drink until they had killed him. Luke saw Paul and found him unafraid. In the night the great apostle had felt that the Lord stood beside him and said: "Be of good cheer; as you have testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so you must be a witness also at Rome." Any ordinary man would have lain dreaming a nightmare about a milling crowd and the harsh cries of hate and murder.

Those to whom disaster comes, blow on blow, are often spared the pain of seeing far ahead. Paul and his friends had no idea how bad things really were to become. When the local commandant ordered Paul to be sent to Caesarea with two half-battalions of soldiers, they welcomed the departure. They were full of hope. They did not know that his imprisonment was to be a matter of years. They could not visualize the long delays of a frightened provincial governor who knew that Palestine was Rome's heel of Achilles. Nor could their gaze penetrate the mist of the future and see Nero slipping from his early moderation into fear and cruelty. They could not imagine the execution block and the garden of Lucina waiting at the end. That robust, healthy spirit with so much to give to human life, who had tried year after year in self-abnegation to

expiate the wrong to which he had consented in his youth, was to be kept in confinement. The whole empire needed Paul, and thousands were hungry for his words, but the senseless prison wall by the sea was to hold him.

Luke was never nobler than in this crisis. He did not flee and leave Paul, as Mark had done ten years before. Exasperated and baffled, he yet left no stone unturned in Caesarea to secure Paul's release. With the others, he asked and obtained from the police permission that Paul should have "indulgence," which meant medical care, writing materials, letters, and the opportunity for conferences. The eager young men of the deputation organized themselves to carry messages for Paul to the churches which he had instituted, and farther if necessary.

It was then, probably, that the great idea of Luke's life came to him, to take up his pen on Paul's behalf. He began to thumb his travel notes and his teaching materials and to rack his memory. He could write something worth-while about Paul's career as he had seen it, and thus help people understand the man. He felt that those eight imprisonments which Paul had disclosed in the letter to the Corinthians were an unwise admission and needed explanation.

One idea led on to another. The defence which he expected to write should include more than the story of Paul's missionary career. It ought to go back to the beginnings of Paul's career as a Christian and tell the story of the vision which had turned him to the new movement. It would be well to make it a defence of the

whole Christian undertaking. Especially, and here Luke's creative imagination was actively at work, he ought to include in his book the story of the vital, life-giving Person whom Paul had seen in his vision and who had inspired the movement. Here in the land of Jesus he had a unique opportunity to find the "certainty" or exact truth of those important early incidents of which the Greek world had so far only vaguely heard.

The days of waiting could be made effective. As week succeeded week and month followed month until two years had passed, Luke added continually to his materials and put them in shape. Out of his notes grew in time the Gospel and the Acts.

Luke Defends Paul

ONE can imagine Luke leaving Paul's prison cell in Caesarea, tramping along stone corridors, through the gates of the thick stone walls, and over the moat and into the country, absorbed in the most difficult problem he had ever had to face. "It is a serious situation," thus his thoughts travelled, "and every day it looks worse. We know the charges are not true and would not stick in court, but the authorities are afraid to let the case come to trial. They think he's dangerous, and they're nervous. They are afraid that any sort of dissension here may open the gates to revolt and make trouble for the empire. Our misfortune is to have had this attack happen in the particular spot where Rome feels most threatened. The police take Paul's case as a political one.

"Now what can we do? We've secured some privileges for Paul. We're asking all the influential friends we can reach to help him. But we have to find some way of convincing the authorities that his record is clear."

Walking by the aqueduct and looking north up to Mount Carmel but hardly seeing the beauty around him, or tramping along the circular mole beyond the harbor, which his younger contemporary Josephus says

was popular with pedestrians, Luke thought his way ahead. One work he could do well and that was to write. The thing to do was to get down on papyrus something which could be multi-copied, with a reader dictating to a roomful of scribes, and then to attempt to circulate it among their influential friends. He would have made excellent use of a printing press or a broadcasting station if he had had them. Luke thought of people who might help to find readers for such a paper in important circles. Old Manaen of Antioch had had a host of important acquaintances in Rome and Galilee, for Antipas had been his foster-brother in Rome, and several of the third- and fourth-generation Herods were in places of power. Also, it would be great if he could get the young grand-nephew of Antipas, who owned these huge estates in Galilee, to listen. (When later they got the second Herod Agrippa to give a hearing to Paul, it must have been a triumph to them; but it came two years too late.)

Or Sergius Paulus of Cyprus might aid them. The city treasurer in Corinth ought to know influential people. Possibly Gallio might be persuaded to speak a word in Rome. People they had met in Ephesus should help—but tragically, the former associates of the murdered governor Silanus who (we think) had befriended them there, would not be able to give aid. Theophilus they were not to address until several years had passed. But there were others. “If I can get over to the people the idea at which Paul was driving, it may save the day. The time seems to have arrived to lay down the scalpel and take up the pen.”

Whether it was in Caesarea that such a course of thought came to Luke's mind, or whether it was in Rome, we cannot be certain; but underlying *Acts* is an obvious purpose—to defend Paul, and there is much reason for believing that part of his writing he did before they left Caesarea.

True, the main difficulty was that Paul had had an uncomfortable number of arrests. His indiscreet letter to the Corinthians telling about his three beatings by Roman colonial police and five others by order of Jewish courts would make a stir if the informers got hold of it and if Nero should begin to listen to them as his predecessors had done. But Paul's hands had been clean on every occasion, as Luke knew. It was never for disorder nor for failure to respect personality that Paul had been arrested.

So Luke set out to plan a written account showing how it had come that Paul had been arrested in Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, in Philippi, Corinth and Ephesus, and mobbed in Lystra and Thessalonica and Jerusalem. It was because Paul had attacked the very thing which thoughtful men everywhere deplored. "Neither against the law of the Jews nor against the Temple nor against Caesar had he sinned at all." To clinch the defence Luke had the court decision of the famous colonial administrator Junius Annaeus Gallio, whose name was one to conjure with in Caesarea or in Rome in 57. Gallio, as we have seen, had ruled that Paul was within his legal rights in teaching about Jesus. Luke could make it clear that Gallio's decision had been the only possible one—that Paul's movement was legally a branch

out of Judaism and therefore entitled to the privileges which the law allowed to "licit religions." It could claim to be part of a legally recognized cult and to have a certain liberty of speech and action. Luke was therefore anxious to show that Paul's teaching was not essentially different from that of the Palestinian apostles and that it had connection with Judaism all along the line. Of course its universalism made an immense difference; it had made the ancient Jewish initiatory rite optional and refused to insist on exclusiveness about table companions. But to Luke the zone of agreement was so great that he still claimed the legal privileges of the ancient monotheistic faith of Judaism. Paul was still "inside the constitution"; "we are Jews by nature" he had recently written. The Way was, to Luke, not a new religion, but a fulfilment of the old. The reason why Paul had launched out on new roads and made some changes, and why he had not been able to continue, as the rabbis had done before him, on the old paths, was a compelling one—his vision.

It came to him that he would have to cover three other points besides showing that the Way could reasonably claim the privileges Gallio had awarded it. First, he could show that his friend was not seditious. The conflicts in which Paul had figured were really to his credit and had been incidental to spreading the leaven of idealism through the empire. Second, he would have to make it clear that the whole movement likewise was not anarchistic and lawless but law-abiding and patriotic. Third, he would have to broaden his defence—and this was a luminous thought which would

never have come to Paul—to show that the Founder of the movement also had not been a leader of sedition but had brought grace and truth. The first and second of these aims were to lead to Acts and the third to the Gospel. We are concerned in this chapter with the first two.

As he tramped home that afternoon under the rosy sky of Palestine in autumn, he thought, "What ought I to include to show that Paul has not been a dangerous character?" A valuable part of his defence, he saw, lay in the pleas which Paul himself had made in Jerusalem and before the court in Caesarea. (We may take the speeches in Acts as covering the main points of Paul's defence without regarding them as transcripts, even approximately, though Luke probably had heard all three of them.) He would need to include also, in some detail, the recent distressing events at Jerusalem. The collection which they had just brought would not need much attention; it had failed; there was no value in calling attention to Jewish irritation about Temple gifts. But Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders was vividly in his mind. To hear it had been a touching experience, for his adventurous friend had realized that never again could he enter Ephesus, because of the violent opposition to him of the silversmiths, and the fears of the Roman governor. Paul himself had written just before the voyage, "Knowing that I have no more place in these parts." Luke's account is full of pathos but that is no sign that he must have written it after forebodings of death had been fulfilled. Luke had

been impressed by Paul's great capacity for friendship and deep and lasting and imaginative devotion to his friends.

The recent months in Greece did not permit much comment. About Ephesus Luke had more to tell, particularly about their two great conflicts—against superstition and against the blind covetousness of the silver industry. Superstition was the curse of the Empire, and the great Seneca had written a book against it. Luke picked out an incident to tell concerning the charlatans who worked cures on superstitious sick people by magic spells taken from books. When Paul had come and taught in the school of Tyrannus for two years, the quacks themselves had turned and become followers of the Way. It had been a triumph.

The empire was also beset with people who wanted profits, regardless of whether they were making human life better or not. Every thoughtful person knew it and was distressed about it. While a great part of the common people of the world lived in an agony of poverty, covetous people put pressure on them and made fortunes from collecting the taxes and furnishing them with the necessities of life. So Luke wrote the story of Demetrius, the silversmith. He was witty and ironical as he described the speech of Demetrius to his fellows in the silver industry; as Moffatt translates it:

My men, you know this trade is the source of our wealth. You also see that the fellow Paul has drawn off a considerable number of people by his persuasions. He declares that hand-made gods are not gods at all. Now the danger is not only that we will have our trade discredited, but that the temple of the

great goddess Artemis will fall into contempt—she whom all Asia and the wide world worship.

The wide world, cynical about any kind of worship, would enjoy that. Luke is making an ironical attack on the covetousness which shuts people's eyes to their own anti-social acts.

A short-sighted man would have suppressed the social teachings and actions of the followers of Jesus. He must have felt tempted to equivocate about the conflicts of Jesus and the apostles with the existing order. But he told what they had done also in Corinth and in Philippi. There they had confronted slavery and fought it. It would help Paul with all serious-minded readers to let them know what the Antioch band had done.

An event which Luke decided to omit is told by Paul. When Peter had come to Antioch after his escape from prison, he at first had sided with Paul in ignoring the orthodox Jewish food-laws which would have shut him from fellowship with Greek Christians. But yielding to the demand of messengers from Jerusalem, he had suddenly refused companionship with those who did not keep the food-laws. Paul had assailed him for it. When good men disagree, what was Luke to say? The church needed to keep its forces united in order to build a better world. Luke loved the freer air of Antioch, where the Christian leaders had taken Greeks into fellowship in the early days without controversy. He wrote that Peter usually stood on the side of tolerance.

In looking for the crucial turning-points of Paul's twenty-six years of work, he saw that his leader's conversion was the most important of all. Every good Greek and Roman would understand that Paul was under a necessity of obeying a vision so compelling as that which had come to him on the Damascus road. A dream was a message from the divine realm, beyond the control of conscious reason, as Homer and Xenophon had shown. Romans would say that after such an experience he could have done nothing else than turn to the Greeks and admit them to fellowship in religion. Particularly the mystery-religions had spread the idea that the human spirit can rise to a high point at which it attains vision face to face with truth, *Epopteia*, when one sees the meaning of life in a flash of insight. Luke believed that Paul had had a valid experience and on the road to Damascus had come in touch with something tremendous and compelling, whose truth all the experience of the later years had verified. It was not anti-Roman but an ethical insight, useful to the highest interests of the empire; it had lifted him from racial exclusiveness, and it promised a new cement for the races of the empire. The Dionysiac mysteries sometimes induced trances by drugs, and the cult of Attis obviously did so by suggestion from its priests, but Paul's vision was a discernment of reality. So Luke put that vision as the focus of all he wrote about Paul. It stands out in his book like the hill Gezer in Palestine which dominates the valley of Ajalon and the pass into the highlands, and which the traveller views again and again from the plains.

Luke's second task was to show that the other leaders also had been law-abiding. For the earlier events of which we read in Acts Luke seems to have had two written sources.¹ One of the two probably came to him from people who had a Hellenistic background, for the passages which Luke took from it refer to Jesus as Savior, and emphasize the divine Spirit. Acts 2, with parts of Acts 1, and Acts 5:17-42 are connected in this way, and may preserve the memories of Philip and other Greek-speaking Christians of Caesarea, some of whom had been among the followers of Jesus in his own lifetime. It is more than possible that some paper with a written account of such memories had come to Luke's table. He refers in the prologue to the fact that many had taken in hand to set forth the story of the things which had been fulfilled. Philip and his four daughters had once lived in Jerusalem, and may have passed on to him some such document.

From this source Luke drove home the importance of brotherhood among the many races which made up the Roman Empire. Because its peoples had once been separate and suspicious nations, there was a widely-felt desire for some cement of the political organization, and Luke plainly suggested that Christianity could supply it. One is sure that enthusiasm flushed his cheek when he wrote about the first Pentecost. In summer the sea-routes were open; Pentecost was the great time for foreigners to visit Jerusalem; travel at the Passover

¹ Jackson, F. J. F., and Lake, K., *Beginnings of Christianity*, Vol. II, p. 172 ff. Professor C. C. Torrey thinks that Luke's source was in Aramaic and that Luke himself translated it into Greek.



was difficult. Representatives of the empire and of its bitterest enemies, Parthians, Medes and Elamites, were gathered in the city. The one especial means which fused them, Luke records, was an experience to which Peter lifted them, an afflatus of high excitement and insight, and Luke understood that they achieved that day a coherence of which every Roman would approve.

The other written source which he used for the early part of Acts is represented in Acts 3, 4:1-33, and 5:1-16, which are about Peter and John, and especially about Peter. This narrative also was set in Jerusalem. Behind the straight-lacedness and rigidity of the Jerusalem community there had been prophetic social passion. About that city's future Luke was plainly worried, but the courageous brotherliness of the Way might yet save it. At any rate the spirit of the early Christian community was so radiant and effective that it stirred his heart: "neither thought any that aught which he possessed was his own." Their life together was an expression of willingness to live rigorously so as to help others. Luke's motive in describing it seems to have been not at all to praise formal community of property under an expectation of a sudden ending of the age, but to commend their willingness to share. As in his story of Zaccheus, he praises pity, simplicity, social justice, and joy.

These accounts of early days fell far short of the vividness which Luke could put into a narrative of what he himself had seen. They were naïve and credulous; they gave an interpretation to Ananias' death, apparently from heart-disease, that it had been a punish-

ment. They omitted a hundred things we would like to know: Matthew's career, the adventures of Thomas, what happened to John. But opportunely, from the standpoint of later usefulness in Rome, they gave a lot of information about Peter, and they bridged the gap between Paul's work and the life of Jesus.

Luke saw at once the parallel between Peter's experience and Paul's. Peter, too, had had a vision of great importance; Luke described it twice, Paul's three times. Peter also had made speeches, and Luke quoted five of them, not suppressing the dangerous fact that they had been messianic. He also had been imprisoned and not for any harm that he had done; Luke records three for Peter, eight for Paul. It is possible that Luke's decision to give Peter so much of his space he made later, when he had reached Rome, where Theophilus and the reading Roman public would have heard of Peter's presence by the Tiber. He has left a picture of Peter as a popular hero, the outstanding holy man of the age. One can imagine the saint of mid-century, gray-bearded, kindly-eyed, dignified and gracious, at times surprisingly brave, and always amazingly effective. Villagers and city people alike thought that his shadow cured the sick.

Besides the two written narratives he gathered many graphic stories which concerned Philip, who was Luke's host in Caesarea, and Philip's friends. Of Luke's direct information on these topics there can be little doubt. Some of the narratives concerned the "Seven," the deacons of Jerusalem. One was the heroic and promising young fire-brand Stephen, whose death seems to

have followed the crucifixion within the year. His dying prayer for forgiveness of enemies was like that of the Master Himself. Luke's transcription of Stephen's speech is not to be taken as verbatim, even though Philip and Paul had both heard it. He may be presumed to have written it up out of reminiscences he had heard or read. Its attack on Jewish nationalism and its plea for the right of men everywhere to have access to God, we may take to be his own idea as well as Stephen's. He again and again attacked exclusiveness, Jewish, Greek, and even Roman. In doing so he laid the ground for affirming the right of conscience against the state.

From Philip and his family, Luke possibly drew his information also about Cornelius. This Roman army officer, a man of wide sympathy and information, in the earlier generation had become a convert in Caesarea under Peter's influence. Philip himself had been guided to the administrative capital as a residence after he had helped the treasurer of Ethiopia find the Way. Paul had visited the city before opening the campaign in Ephesus. Luke does not breathe a hint that he knew anything about the troubles which were to come in the year 66 in Caesarea, street fighting between Jews and Syrian Greeks, which was to lead to the Jewish revolt, to Philip's removal to Ephesus, and in time to the destruction of Jerusalem. It is almost inconceivable that Luke could have described the church in Caesarea as he has if he had known what was to happen to his friends there.

Out of these researches on behalf of Paul grew, in

time, the vigorous book of Acts, not completed in Caesarea but surely conceived there. There is no evidence for the common belief that he wrote the Gospel first and after a long time wrote Acts. He had penned his "we" passages long before he wrote either Acts or the Gospel, in some form of travel-notes; and the two volumes are one work. Much of the main labor on both of them must have been done during that long-drawn-out agony of waiting in Caesarea, for in the winter of the year 58 all his notes and baggage were to go into the sea in a shipwreck, and only a few precious papers, those which he could carry on his person, were to be preserved. Perhaps he saved them in a metal tube fastened around his neck, in Palestinian fashion. Later, in Rome, he was to add some closing chapters to the Acts. It is fair to say that he never finished it, for it does not include the climax it leads us to expect, as we shall see.

To sum up: the preferences and interests of the author are unmistakable in Acts, both in the material which he selected and in the way he handled it. He is defending Paul and the early church, showing that the Christians were never a real problem to the Roman government. He claims for the Way the legal rights of Judaism. He defends the Way by challenging social wrongs in its name. His interest is ethical, social, and missionary. He sees human life deformed by superstition, cruelty, sensuality, greed, and narrow nationalism. He regards the Way as the means by which, without political rebellion, these evil spirits may be driven from human life. He has much to say about women

and their work for the kingdom, he is deeply interested in the poor and in people of other races, he believes in the Spirit, and he emphasizes the importance of organization. Just as in the Gospel he is to make use of Psalms, so in Acts he enjoys inserting poetical quotations. He mentions the names of eyewitnesses or of his informants as if to state, "This person can vouch for what I say." The book of Acts came out of heart-break and disappointment, but it is one of the happiest books in the world. Its social passion is strong, alert, and hopeful.

In the dreariness of prison, in the meantime, Paul kept himself busy with reading, philosophical speculation, writing to his churches, and conferring with his messengers. There are strong reasons for believing that he wrote the epistles to Philemon and to the Colossians from Caesarea, as Weiss and Holtzmann thought. He would naturally wish to communicate with his new converts at an early time after he had left them, for his work in Asia had been interrupted. A second reason for thinking so is that the friends whom he mentions in the epistles are just the ones who Luke says had come to Palestine—Timothy, Aristarchus, Luke, Tychicus. The main objection disappears if we use in Philemon the translation "Paul the ambassador" instead of "Paul the aged," for Paul at this period was far too robust for such an adjective. If this surmise is correct, then it was in Caesarea that they found a slave who had run away from their old friend Philemon in Colossae, and who became "a brother beloved," possibly by being engaged as a body-servant for the pris-

oner. Mark also came from his home in Jerusalem to help Paul. Once Mark had deserted them when they faced a difficult journey; to his everlasting credit he came in time of need and offered his aid. He was soon to join Peter and was on his way north to Colossae. Paul sent a message ahead by Tychicus and Onesimus to introduce him. Luke, to our regret, did not change the unfavorable characterization of Mark which he had written into his work. Paul, writing to his old friends in the north and to others whom he had never seen, told them of his meditations. Someone had brought him a book to read, from Alexandria, by Philo. He had taken time, as he never had been able to do in his missionary work, and had been thinking of an idea which Philo, the Jewish-Greek philosopher, had developed recently, about the creative principle by which God made the universe, the Word, or Logos. Paul identified that principle with Christ, who drew together "the innumerable broken strands of history."² Luke's interest in Jesus was different; he was planning a volume Paul would never have dreamed of writing, about the clear-headed teacher rather than the cosmic Savior.

² Scott, E. F., *Literature of the New Testament*, 1932, p. 181.

The Words of Jesus

IN THE stone guest-chamber of Philip's house in Caesarea early in the year 57 Luke lay shivering, not only from the cold of the rainy, winter night, but also and far more from the loneliness of his burden in that time of danger. His friends lay sleeping near him under their padded woolen quilts, but the responsibility lay on him. Artist as he was, his serenity and courage and urbanity sometimes yielded to dark despair and then he was in the trough of the wave. In the night, especially after fatigue, he sometimes wakened with the horror of the milling crowd around him, as even twenty years after the war an aviator will sometimes waken shuddering and gasping at the memory of his falling plane. Luke's fears he has betrayed in Acts. His days, fortunately, were crowded. A physician in Palestine is always in demand. He had also to make frequent visits to Paul, having secured permission from the Roman officials. He was endeavoring to interview whatever prominent people he could reach on Paul's behalf, and to send letters to others, leaving no stone unturned. His evenings he could devote to writing his defence of the Way, holding his parchment close to the little olive oil lamp. But sometimes in the dark he would start in his sleep and waken to anxious reality. His friend and

his cause were in serious danger. If it had not been for inner resources long developed he would have had a bad time.

Then in the loneliness of the night there came to his disciplined mind sentences which, we think, he had known for years, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body but after that have nothing more that they can do. Be not anxious for your life what ye shall eat nor yet for your body what ye shall put on." He lay in the darkness and thought about those consoling words; he was surrounded by loving Spirit. Other things which Jesus had said came to his memory.

The thought may have come to him then, in some such moment, that in the inspiring words which Jesus had spoken might be the approach he needed for his argument. He had decided to show, if his researches proved it true, that the Founder, as well as Paul and the early Christians, had been constructive and not dangerous to the Empire. Luke was interested in history as Paul was not. Paul was far less concerned with the words and deeds of Jesus than in giving people an experience of a life-giving Lord; but Luke had begun with saviors in his pagan days, had grown up in that atmosphere, had gone on to seek a real Lord who had been historical, human. He revelled in his early discovery that a savior was offered him who was no myth but an actual figure, courageous and courage-giving, who had gone about doing good. He was sure that the right approach to the influential people who would be likely to help them was to give an account of the actual life of Jesus, to show what in Luke's estimation

he had really been—a torrential poet and teacher whose life had been both adventurous and serene, from whose mouth gracious words had come, on whose lips the multitudes had hung, a prophet and more than a prophet.

Already, before he had come to Caesarea, he had known the Founder's teachings. It is probable that the phrase "the words of Jesus" had a particular connotation to him, more definite than the phrase has to us. He thought of a particular collection of sayings in existence in his time. The present-day hypothesis, almost inescapable in spite of some difficulties, is that there was a written document which Luke, and later the author of the First Gospel, used; for there are 238 verses common to both, and in practically the same order; and if the verses are isolated they are fairly homogeneous. The alternative is that Matthew drew from Luke. To that there are serious objections, so we come back to the hypothesis of a written source. Professor Harnack called it "The Collection of Sayings"; Sir William Mitchell Ramsay called it "the oldest written Gospel"; others have called it "Q." It came into existence early. Professor Harnack says 40 A.D.; Ramsay still earlier; Professor C. C. Torrey's remark is apt at this point, "There is not a word in any of the four Gospels which might not have been written within twenty years of the death of Jesus."¹ That there are Hellenistic passages in these verses is no proof of a late date, for some of the followers of Jesus in his own lifetime were Hellenists, and Jesus' own message must

¹ Torrey, C. C., *The Four Gospels*, p. 256.

have been in sympathy with their needs. While it emphasized many things to which Greeks would respond—the spirit of joy, God as close to his world, the good life as non-nationalistic and universalistic, the coming judgment as non-catastrophic—yet it was also full of the historic Palestinian spirit of protest against the submergence of the common man.

One can imagine the physician recalling that he had found a copy in Jerusalem at the time of his famine-relief visit long before—pure guesswork, but perfectly possible. Down near the Temple area in the dark, little streets were tiny bookstores where pilgrims came. After work was over some summer evening, he had turned his footsteps there, seen the little book and bought it, as the Ethiopian treasurer a few years before had bought a copy of Isaiah. We can visualize the weary doctor in some spare moment after he had seen to the sick, the hungry, the camels, the stores, turning to his little volume and reading its striking phrases. When he came to the words, "Consider the lilies," his own spirit responded to the poet-soul who had spoken them, as Kagawa's was to do long after. Jesus' sensitiveness to beauty and to the Spirit behind it, Jesus' sparkling humor and awareness of human need, reached the relief-worker. On his voyage home, and while in Antioch waiting for patients, he had continued to ponder it.

It probably had had a wide circulation in Antioch, as Professor Dibelius thinks.² Its Beatitudes had an appeal to which the happy Antioch circle of Christians would respond. One thinks of Barnabas using it there,

² Dibelius, M., *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 233.

and the "men from Cyprus and Cyrene" and Simeon called Niger. Luke had needed just such a book in his own missionary work—in Antioch, in Troas, in Macedonia, where we have his clear statement that he journeyed "to preach the gospel." He had needed facts about Jesus for such work, and for work in Colossae which he undertook for Paul, later. For thirteen years it had been his *vade mecum*. One receives from Acts the impression that early books about Jesus circulated more widely than we can actually prove. The new empire was seething with ideas. Writers in Italy, only slightly later, have left traces of ideas like those of Jesus, just as Virgil drew from Isaiah's writings. At any rate, by the year 56, in Palestine, Luke possessed a written book containing the Sayings, and they impressed him greatly by their social earnestness and their insight into spiritual and mystical resources.

Who had gathered the Sayings Luke probably knew but he does not tell us, unless his hint is hidden where we have not yet found it. It had been some keen-minded lover of poetry who knew the needs of missionaries and teachers and churches, and the Sayings all had a survival value; they answered just the questions which people were asking. Many have guessed that he was the shrewd, influential, wealthy, idealistic Matthew of Capernaum, because a disciple of a disciple of the apostles, named Papias, wrote, "Matthew composed his history in the Hebrew tongue."³ "Hebrew" means Aramaic, "history" might be translated "sayings." But the reference is uncertain and we do not

³ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 39.

know. He was another of the vigorous men and women about whom volumes of the Acts might have been written.

The followers of the great prophets had compiled the words of their leaders, and so had the disciples of Hippocrates. (One of the latter's followers had gathered his master's aphorisms and quotable sentences five hundred years before this time, and had arranged them by topics, alphabetically. Medical students had to learn the sayings by heart, to quote to their patients in order to reassure them. One of these collections is extant; named *Dentition*, it is largely a collection of bits of advice on other subjects.) The Christian disciple seems to have made his collection in Aramaic, the language of Palestine and the language of Jesus, and then some one adapted it to the needs of the Greek-speaking followers.

This volume Luke had in Caesarea at a time when he needed it most. Casting about for a means of defending the Christian Way as it had taken form in the life of Jesus, and groping for a foundation on which to build, he remembered it. It appealed to him as offering the type of defence which his mind liked—a defence which attacked the evils of society and offered to cure them. It had a passion for mercy; it offered resources for better living; it gave an explanation of the significance of Jesus. With a flash of insight he saw that the best defence of the Christians was the stormy, commanding figure of Jesus himself, friend of the common people, clear thinker, natural master of literary method, serene as the sunshine but as unpre-

dictable and surprising in his insights as an electric storm in the mountains.⁴ So he took the sayings as the nucleus of his apologetic. He made the collection the backbone of his story. "It stands out like a ridge in his Gospel," says Harnack. It is "the foundation," says Vincent Taylor.

As we reconstruct it, it included forty-three topics and covered at least 238 of the verses of our Third Gospel. Manson⁵ in his commentary gives a reconstruction. Or a student can discover it for himself by marking in a synopsis of the Gospels what is common to Matthew and Luke and is not in Mark; that leaves a minimum on a strict construction basis; there must have been much more. No one knows whether it came to Luke in Aramaic, which most of the Palestinian followers spoke, or in Greek.

Professor Torrey in the notes on his new translation, *The Four Gospels*, has made an Aramaic ground-writing seem a necessary part of the development. For example, Luke 11:41 and 12:46 he thinks represent mistranslations of Aramaic phrases. Professor Goodspeed, on the other hand, is sure that there was practically no literary activity in Aramaic in that period, for none has survived; but no literature could survive the terrible destruction of the rebellion and the siege of Jerusalem that was to come in a decade. Behind the written words, whether they were Greek or Aramaic, Luke could see the unorganized circles of Aramaic-speaking "saints" in the villages and in Jerusalem. They

⁴ Luke 17:24.

⁵ Manson, W., *The Gospel of Luke*.

had gathered the words of Jesus together—epigrams and commandments, sayings, stories, and parables, references to current events, lyric poems, doom-songs—to meet some need here, to answer someone's question there, thinking of the flashing genius who had seemed to them to be in unique relationship with God as well as the herald of the era of release.

It would help us to understand Luke's way of thinking and to follow him in his adventure if we see what the Collection of Sayings, to which he gave such great importance, meant to him. Its contents from his point of view must have seemed searching, illuminating, powerful.

The temptation story (Luke 4:1-13) was a crucial revelation of the inner life of the Master which could have come from no one else. Jesus had seen, not once but many times, a great need in Palestine of an economic movement, metaphorically turning stones into bread, and had felt the appeal of such a career. But it would almost inevitably lead to exploitation, and he rejected it. The way was open also for a movement inside the Roman empire or against it, which might have made Palestine great again; but it pointed to violence, hate, fear. The third temptation, strongest of all and put as climax in this earliest record, was to do what every sensitive spirit is tempted to do—to retreat from the struggle for justice, to withdraw into a life of communion with God on some pinnacle of the Temple, so to speak, and to leave it to God to set things right. So Ellen Starr left Jane Addams and entered a convent. That, too, Jesus had rejected; his way was to

be active by attacking wrongs with words and ideas, by elevating and developing personalities, by appealing to human spirits. The story must have seemed to Luke to be a warning and an inspiration; the right way to seek the kingdom was by teaching and persuasion. Then followed five great addresses, themselves collections of sayings.

i. The sermon on the plain (Luke 6:20-49) would follow logically on the temptation story and probably did in the original, as a summary of the teaching to give which the Master had rejected all his other opportunities. As we have it today, there is a reference to the shining eyes of Jesus, but that is the physician's own addition. The editor of the Collection had put it also into dramatic form as a sermon on some fertile plain in Galilee; but to Luke it was not of one piece, and with blunt honesty he breaks it apart with the words, "And he spake a parable unto them," as later he was to break Mark 13 apart. Nevertheless it had unity and came to a climax. Sentence after sentence must have seemed tremendous. It carried for one thing a saying which was to him the heart of the Christian message, "The Most High is kind . . . be ye therefore merciful." This was no escape-mechanism, but a call to courageous action in a world which emphasized cruelty. As we have seen, Luke had probably spent part of his internship, like Galen after him, in looking after gladiators. Down under the seats of the Colosseum, out of sight, he had operated on injured men or treated sickening wounds, pouring in oil and wine. Of such popular resorts there were many hundred in the Em-

pire. His soul revolted at a system which taught youth to cheer and shout and point thumbs down while some ruffian thrust a spear into the quivering body of a village boy. It was enough to make a man doubt that there was any good purpose in the universe, that such things could be. But the book brought a new teaching. God was kind; Luke might give up faith in God's power, but not in God's love. Having once faced the words of Jesus he could never again watch a gladiatorial fight, nor see any beauty in one of their parades, nor rest content until the infamous thing was ended.

Another thing which the sermon on the plain taught was, "Love your enemies and do them good," enemies meaning national foes certainly, and probably also personal ones. He had heard the trumpets and the tramp of feet as the armies marched up from Antioch towards Armenia or Persia; had seen the sick come back, stricken in camp epidemics; knew the bloody violence of the Roman wars; was aware that readiness to fight had brought the downfall of his beloved Greece. In the old days, Athens, successful and arrogant, had tried to dominate the other city-states; they had grown envious and resentful; envy and fear had led to worse injustice; war had followed injustice; they had butchered one another until the great racial strain was gone forever. People in his own day had not yet learned the lesson. They still retaliated. The commandment of Jesus offered the only way out.

The book gave also a courageous promise of relief for the oppressed, "Blessed are ye poor, ye that hunger now." He had seen the unjustifiable inequalities of

Antioch, based not on merit at all, but on luck, or ruthlessness, or on political manipulation. Here was the promise of social justice when the new order, begun with Jesus, would spread, gradually or by great leaps, until it touched all life and brought a release far more than economic. One could share that blessedness at once in some degree. Forces played strongly around Luke to make him soften that word of Jesus and make it something less active, less prophetic, less challenging, as they were to play on Matthew later; but he has let it stand, however dangerous. This physician had a lot of courage. It was a strange way to defend a cause, to attack social inequalities; but there it is today in the Gospel.

It gave a warning which must have given him immense relief, when he had digested it: "Judge not." He had been tempted more than once to feel aggrieved and distressed that others did not adopt the way of living which seemed to him imperative, did not follow the new high adventure which had cost him ease and prosperity. Here was a caution that while one must be stern with one's own soul one must be gentle in one's judgments of others. Anything less might make one bitter, might warp character. Having caught the point he found more glow in life. Luke always kept his tolerance and his sense of humor.

2. The saying which has come to us as Luke 10:21-24 was part of the Collection, with its strange words, "No man knoweth . . . who the Father is save the son." Luke would understand that Jesus had affirmed his own unique relationship to God as well as being Mes-

siah. It is like other early passages in which Jesus claimed to be greater than Solomon, greater than Jonah, the "son of man" from heaven who would sometime acknowledge his faithful followers before the angels of God, sayings which indicate a metaphysical background for Jesus. The words went farther; they pressed the reader for allegiance; they called for a decision. This sense of something numinous was not Luke's invention; it had been in the earliest stratum.

3. In another part of the Sayings (Luke 11:24) he found that the Master had taught his disciples to draw on hidden resources by an attitude and a technique of prayer. Luke had seen men go away even from pagan worship with shining eyes; surely there was a better way without the superstition. The words not only gave him a form of prayer but put prayer on the plane of fellowship with God in working for the kingdom on earth. They assured him that the fatherly Spirit immanent in the universe is concerned for his children's welfare and is ready to give grace to those who are receptive.

4. The little book recorded also, "Seek ye the kingdom of God" (Luke 12:31). His heart leaped at the prospect of its spread, both by means of the attitude of Christians and also in unexpected ways by the intervention of God, until it should change both individuals and also institutions, make the common people happy, and include all races. The days of the Gentiles were some day to be fulfilled; the Roman empire would in time pass away, but in the meantime Christians could work within it, in cooperation with its best

forces. Luke admired the orderliness of Roman administration, helped introduce it into the apostolic churches, always emphasized the rank of apostle. He admired Roman interest in roads, in economic welfare, in peace. He liked the attitude of men like Gallio and Seneca who hated slavery, gladiatorial shows, injustice in the courts. In this he was the comrade of Paul and Peter who had written, in that first flush of recognition in the Roman courts, "The powers that be are ordained of God" and, "Honor the Emperor"; and he was the forerunner of the John of the Fourth Gospel, but he is clear that there is a higher loyalty—"We must obey God rather than men."

5. The closing words of the collection (Luke 17:23-37) with their picture of another flood, metaphorically speaking, another destruction of Sodom, he would understand to be a very practical warning. Doom was obviously coming soon for Palestine unless its people rose above their bitter factionalism and their narrow nationalism; he could see a threat of judgment over the empire itself, in the far distant future, if it continued on its course of exploitation and sensuality.

When he copied the parable of the house on the sand, the words which have come from his pen suggest the Tiber in flood, "the stream did beat vehemently"; almost certainly it was not until he reached Rome that he put his Gospel in final form, and he gave it local color and the tang of his own personality. The word "sword" he did not like to leave in Jesus' teaching; Jesus had used it as a metaphor of militant and dangerous effort but had never meant violence. Luke used

"division" instead: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you Nay, but rather division." Beside the parable of the lost sheep he added other parables he knew, of a lost coin and a lost son.

Even if we should be forced to abandon the hypothesis of a single written collection—though the argument from order is strong against it, and adopt a theory of many strands of oral tradition, yet his use of the words of Jesus as the core of his volume is a revelation of his spirit. The cutting, judging, joyous words of Jesus are in any case central. The social passion and the mystical interest of Luke are revealed either way. Luke could hardly have made a clearer disclosure of what he himself was. He revealed his own wide compassion for the villager, the peasant, the city laborer, the man of other race than Roman, combined with social creativeness, mystical dependence on prayer, humility before truth, and radiant joyousness. And he was a realist. He wanted his religious experience to have a foundation in historical truth.

Years later, when Luke neared old age, someone brought a copy of Matthew's Gospel to him, we need not doubt. Reading it he saw in what a different setting it placed some of the sayings. Matthew had put a keener edge on some of the phrases he had known. "I say unto you that hear" had become "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, but I say unto you"; surely Matthew had access to another source which he had not known. Matthew also had shifted the order of the temptations around, and put the second, about the kingdoms of the world, into

the place of emphasis. Matthew had greatly enlarged the sermon on the plain, drawing together into the one great discourse many sayings which he himself had left in other places, hardly classified at all. Matthew had the authentic touch and had caught better than himself the sweep and unity and authoritative power of the words which had given form to his own life.

Luke was never to know that long afterwards his work was to influence Arnold of Brescia and Francis of Assissi, nor that Wyclif would read his Gospel and catch the social message he had made clear, and by a book named from one of its phrases, *The Kingdom of God, Dominio Dei*, upset the feudal system. He was never to see what we are aware of, Tolstoi's taking another phrase from his Gospel, "The Kingdom of God is within you," and with it helping to break imperial systems based on violence.

The little book had helped mold his life for years, but he knew that it needed testing by further research. All he knew about Jesus indicated that his leader had been far from seditious; in Palestine he could check and see if his conception had been correct. That he proceeded to do, and part of his two years in Caesarea was doubtless given to the absorbing task of hunting for authentic accounts of the words and deeds of Jesus.

VIII

Not in the Other Gospels

DURING the two years and more of Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea, there was probably much happy and witty conversation on Philip's housetop. In the evenings some of the brilliant circle of Christians who had been drawn for one reason or another to the provincial capital must often have met to talk over their common difficulties. Outdoors is pleasant even in winter. On evenings when work permitted they must have gathered where they could watch the sun's great disk swell and redden before it sank behind the sea. The land breeze was warm behind them. The cries of the peddlers and roar of the city died away. Sometimes in the twilight a peasant started a shepherd's tune on a pipe.

Some of the keen young Greeks and Grecian Jews who had come in Paul's delegation probably stayed through the first summer, though one may be sure that poor Trophimus, accused of trespass in the Temple court, a capital offence, had slipped quickly away; after his acquittal or release, the first ship would not leave soon enough for him. Three others drop out of the picture without further mention, Sopater, Secundus, and Gaius. Tychicus had gone on an errand for Paul to Colossae. Aristarchus had landed in prison, Paul

tells us, though we do not know why, and so had an important new-comer, Epaphras, founder of the Colossian church, who had brought badly needed funds. Paul, their chief, was still in the yellow stone castle by the sea, trying to bring his case to trial, and his torrential personality was always in the background of their thinking.

But Timothy, who later was to go to Ephesus and receive an epistle there from Paul, stayed in Caesarea for a long time. Timothy was only slightly younger than Luke himself. A chosen administrator, he was polished and careful. As the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother, one who had felt in his childhood home the mingling of two great cultures, he must have been aware that the crucial religious issue of the day was whether they would keep the Way open to Greeks, or make it a nationalistic sect. Philip, an impressive veteran and their host, talked to Luke also from a rich fund of experience. He was a man who would have drawn attention in almost any circle. Years ago he had won the treasurer of an important country to the Way, and at another time had stirred a whole city. A generation before, in the Pentecostal days at Jerusalem, as an ardent young Greek-speaking Jew he had been made an officer among the brethren there and had seen both the happy days and the tragic ones. He had known Jesus. Philip's daughters also probably joined in the evening discussions, four talented young women, the oldest of whom may have been near Luke's own age. Luke mentions that the four were "prophetesses," that is, able to make speeches in their own

right, and enthusiastic evangelists of the Way. Their father, in spite of his Greek name, had allowed them their education, Jewish fashion. Later they were to do things of such importance as to become noted characters. The famous bishop Papias, born about 68 A.D., was to know and mention the four. They must therefore have been younger contemporaries of Luke. A century later Polycrates,¹ bishop of Ephesus, was to write, "Philip sleeps in Hierapolis and his two aged virgin daughters; another of his daughters, who lived in the holy Spirit, rests at Ephesus." Clement of Alexandria says that at least two of them married. As young girls the older of them may have known Mary the mother of Jesus, in her old age, and others in the Jerusalem circle. The oldest could not well have been more than nine or ten years old when Jesus died. Luke refrained from giving their names, with Greek reticence, for the Greeks did not like to have their women appear in public. But he mentioned them with some emphasis and had some reason for doing so, as he never referred to a person without a reason. It may be because they supplied him with information. To them he may have been indebted for some of the stories and parables about women, and perhaps also for his narrative of the childhood of Jesus, which he twice traces definitely to Mary.

The sisters surely had known Mary the mother of Mark, possibly Susanna of Galilee, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, formerly high official in the Syrian provincial government as steward of Herod Antipas.

¹ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 30, 39.

The latter Luke mentions for some purpose of his own; another of the many hints we can read in his lines that he thought Theophilus and his other readers would be interested in the Herod family. For that same reason in writing Acts he refers to Drusilla and Bernice, women of the family of the Herods, and to Manaen, and in drawing material from Mark he suppresses Mark's criticisms of the "Herodians."

Luke had long had some knowledge about Jesus' life, as well as possessing the collected sayings of Jesus. More than a decade ago he had known Barnabas in Antioch and the early brethren from Cyprus and Cyrene who had brought word about the Lord to the north. He himself had taught about the Way for years, telling people about Jesus and the resurrection, and about life in his fellowship on a higher plane.

Besides that, we may be sure, in Palestine he was rapidly acquiring a new fund of tales. Always an energetic spirit and a seasoned saunterer, he was probably becoming acquainted with the unique and interesting villages of Palestine. He mentions a dozen of them. Each had its own charm, he had found, and its own specialty, and was a discovery. Some of them had names he could find in the records of Joshua, twelve centuries before his time. He tells us that some of the stories he chose for his Gospel come from them.² The villages were neither blind nor deaf, in spite of their poverty, but alert. Many of them were in places of beauty so that no one seeing them could ever forget them. Their people to this day are both imaginative and witty. One

² Luke 1:65, 2:38, 4:14, 7:17, etc.

dark night in 1918 the writer, walking late, met a hill villager and expressed surprise. The villager flashed back rather shame-facedly a witty proverb about a donkey far from home. In many villages were groups of "saints," of whom the older ones had seen Jesus. In a score of places they had preserved their memories, first-hand or near it, of his life and speech. Their Aramaic speech could hardly have troubled Luke who had grown up in Antioch.

Also the friends pooled their information for Luke's benefit. If they had classified the material they accumulated, in addition to the collection of sayings, it would have including the following "forms":

- (1) parables, many of them with a flash of beauty like a flicker's wings, some short metaphors, others stories full of humor or compassion;
- (2) aphorisms of Jesus—wise insights which could be used to turn a point, or bring a laugh, or open some one's eyes to the truth;
- (3) brief sayings-stories which came to a focus in some sparkling saying of the Lord, "paradigms," some students call them;
- (4) stories of deeds of power, sometimes preserving only a fragment of an incident, sometimes a longer account of a healing;
- (5) anecdotes or "tales" connecting Jesus with some well-known person such as Zaccheus, as Professor Dibelius³ suggests, or Peter, or the martyred James, or Mary and Martha, or with a

³ Dibelius, Martin, *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. 118.

place such as Nazareth. Luke omits names if they meant nothing to his readers; for example Bartimeus, whom Mark mentions.

Some of the stories, it is more than possible, had already been written, as Luke suggests in his preface, just as the sayings had been collected and transcribed. Professor C. C. Torrey, who is said to know Aramaic almost as well as his mother tongue, in his *The Four Gospels* mentions many passages where someone, he thinks Luke, has mistranslated the original into Greek, and thinks that many of these mistranslations arose not from a similar sound of the word but from a similar appearance of written letters. Of these mistranslations seventeen occur in the "L" sections. But to questions as to who wrote the stories in Aramaic and who translated them into Greek we can give no sure answer.

For all the information written or spoken which came to him, Luke had at least two tests, reality and aptness. Wanting to commend Christianity to inquiring readers, some of whom were sure to be highly critical, he resolved to use only what was true and what was alive. He tested it by the question, "Is it authentic?" In every place which we can check connected with the life and teaching of Jesus, he was exceedingly careful to be accurate. He rarely padded the material which he drew from the Sayings or from Mark, nor expanded it to make a reasonable story, though he sometimes corrected it, or conflated two passages into one, or supplied a setting, or omitted something indis-

creet. He reproduced his materials from these two sources, we know, in the same concise, well-worn, highly condensed form in which he found it. Probably then that was his method throughout his study of the life of Jesus. He rejected materials which he did not think accurate, kept only what was well authenticated, and allowed himself little leeway in transcribing it. He did not embroider. What he might have included but did not we can see from the apocryphal writings. The Emmaus story is the only one which is not highly condensed.

A second test which Luke applied was, "Will this material help people to find how to live happily and abundantly?" He allowed himself to go far beyond a defence of the Christians and to appeal to his readers to adopt this way of life. He looked therefore for incidents which would touch people's consciences, although not all his facts are of that type. He preferred stories which probed conventionalities. He chose parables which were socially challenging, many of which must have drawn his admiration by their courage.

We can see his mind at work as he decided to accept the parable about the good Samaritan. No one could stay long in Caesarea without being brought face to face with racial hate in all its ugliness. The two leading races were literally at daggers' points and often fought on the city streets. The racial animosity was so severe that inside ten years the town's whole Jewish population was to be either massacred or exiled. Luke was alarmed at the tension, as were many other Roman citizens. On the other hand he could count on some

support from enlightened people everywhere if he showed that Christianity could cure race hatred. There came to him somehow, perhaps through Philip, the story which Jesus had told about a merchant from Samaria who across the barriers of prejudice helped a stricken man of Jesus' own race. Luke saw at once its social value. The parable made it clear that Jesus had seen the universal implications of the prophets' teachings, had had sympathies far wider than the Jewish nation, and had supplied a spirit which could cement together the diverse racial elements of the world, if given a chance. Just as he found a place in Acts for the choosing by the broad-minded church at Antioch of Simeon called Niger as one of its leaders, and for the uniting of men of many nations at Pentecost when Peter preached about Jesus, and just as he found room in his Gospel for Jesus' teaching at Nazareth about Elijah's wide sympathies, so he chose this parable. It was not only characteristic of Jesus; it also would appeal to people of good-will. He finally set it in a context drawn from Mark, but it is his own discovery, and peculiar to his Gospel.

He discovered from some source or other the parables of the farmer who built many barns, of the lowest place, of the woman seeking the lost coin, of the father welcoming his prodigal son, of the Pharisee and the publican, of Lazarus and the rich man, as well as parables about happy and trustful prayer. It can be no accident that many of those which he accepted bear on the questions of social ethics. He wanted parables which would appeal to socially-minded people,

and such material was at his hand. It would no doubt have appealed to his sense of humor if he could have seen that in our day some Bible students would think him their author instead of their recorder.

An aphorism of Jesus which he discovered somewhere read, "The kings of the earth exercise lordship over them and they that exercise authority are called Benefactors, but ye shall not be so." That must have been very impressive in the first century when a few rich families were alarming the thoughtful people of the world by their steady accumulation of wealth and power. Many men who believed in the old Greek spirit of democracy or in the old Roman simplicity were restless and uneasy. Caligula, in a recent administration, had barely failed in his effort to revive the Egyptian tradition of religious sanction for an autocrat. This word of Jesus must have seemed to Luke to be an outstanding rebuke to the spirit which seeks power, even benevolent power, instead of building up brotherliness.

Other sayings which are in the so-called "L" section of his Gospel he must have accepted because he believed that the kingdom of God was not something to look for in the future from the intervention of God alone, but was a present reality. To him it meant continued loyalty, day by day, rather than waiting for the "coming." A visitation of Jesus he looked for in the future, without doubt, a divine judgment on the nations in the processes of history, but a delayed one. The kingdom was already begun: "It cometh not with observation; it is among you." God was to him per-

susive and immanent as well as catastrophic and transcendent.

Luke's originality and social bias are evident from the way he put his Lord's promise to bring release to the poor as the crucial event of the ministry. He must have asked himself, "Of all these thirty-six episodes, which is most characteristic of Jesus?" He chose the Nazareth scene, and made it stand out in his Gospel as the very heart of Jesus' message. Among the early stories which had come to him, two were connected with that village in the northern hills. One was about Jesus' having read Isaiah aloud in the synagogue to the crowd's approval, a story cast in the primitive "paradigm" form, coming to a focus in the saying of Jesus, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." He found also apparently a second story about Nazareth, that Jesus had appealed for good-will towards the Greeks and Romans, in the spirit of Elijah and Elisha, after which the people of Nazareth had attempted to kill the Master. These he took to refer to a single actual incident, adding also, when Mark came to his hands, a double anecdote from that Gospel about the Nazareth crowd first approving, and then condemning Jesus. Luke saw beyond the form of the story to the ethical sensitiveness it revealed. He knew the villages of the hills, limestone cottages, whitewashed, usually with the print of a hand in red or black on the whitewash to keep off the evil eye. Their people had heavy burdens. Profiteering lenders, land-holders, buyers, exploited them. Then Jesus had come calling greedy people to a better way, and promising release to the op-

pressed. It must have taken courage for Luke to put such a story in the foreground of his work. Here he was again, starting out to defend the Christians and ending by attacking powerful wrongs. Exploiters couldn't be expected to enjoy the account of how the radiant Teacher had said, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor." Herod Agrippa the Second had rich estates in that very region and enjoyed great influence in Caesarea and in Rome, and, as we have seen, Luke needed his friendship. Nevertheless, there were Jesus' words, "He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives; to set at liberty them that are bruised; this day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears." It was not tactful, and it was even dangerous. Yet Luke preserved the saying and made it very prominent, aware that Jesus' teaching also had been more adventurous than canny. The highest Greek thought of the past would support him. Dangerous or not, Jesus had spoken on behalf of justice. This answers the question, where Luke got his passion for justice. It had come in part, no doubt, from his early environment. But it had kindled into a flame when he put himself into union with the historic Jesus, whom he had never seen, but whose life and words he had learned to love.

We must not miss the sense of urgency which was on Luke, which he saw also had been on Jesus. He felt that his day was a critical time for himself and for all men. The lines were closely drawn between those who were willing to adopt the attitude of obedience to God and those who, like the people of Nazareth,

or Simon the Pharisee, opposed its implications. Jesus had "come to cast fire on the earth." Let men adopt a new way of thinking before it was too late. Both John Macmurray in *Creative Society* and Rudolph Bultmann in *Jesus the Word* see in Luke's Gospel a sense of emergency and perilousness. Macmurray quotes the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and points to the time factor as important: let a man decide quickly to follow Jesus before a terrible cataclysm comes which is impending in human society. Bultmann quotes from Luke the comment when the tower had killed the workmen, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," to show that Jesus urged instant and complete obedience to God, before God in his power intervened to change human affairs. Luke, as we have seen, inclined to interpret the idea of God's intervention as a long process because God is immanent: in God we live and move and have our being. Yet there was a pressing danger. Let chauvinistic Palestine turn from violence. But it was more: Jesus had called for decision. Let men everywhere repent, obey God, and turn towards compassion on all those in need.

Many people thought of women as either playthings or drudges, and capable of being nothing more. As Nietzsche said that woman was meant to be a toy, so the Greeks accepted the usage which thrust women either into seclusion in the household, or into the class of unrespected women. Even to the Romans culture was not for wives and daughters, or respectable women: "women's task was to be obedient."⁴ Luke hurled into

⁴ Angus, S., *Early Environment of Christianity*, p. 49.

that Roman world the narrative of a woman of the town who had been a sinner. It is a bit of history, of shining beauty from a dissolute age, like a lily in a swamp. As Luke tells it, a woman whose name he withholds, but who had been of known record, whose "sins had been many," had found new motives, new life, forgiveness, and release. The change was because of Jesus' teachings and influence. In gratitude she took a flask of some ointment like attar of roses and sought out the Teacher in the accessible court of a Pharisee named Simon. As a slave would do it for an honored person, she washed the feet of Jesus, and poured on them her precious ointment, so that the fragrance spread through the court. It was a distinctly Oriental gesture, evidently full of kindly emotion inspired by thankfulness. Simon and the company looked on with contempt, as Luke makes clear. Conventional Greek readers, with their ideas that women should be secluded and kept from expressing ideas or showing appreciation, would share this disdain. But Jesus said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee," and opened Simon's eyes to new insights. Jesus accepted people as followers and comrades, without distinction of sex. Luke included no less than seven incidents which show respect for women. He stood, as a follower of the Way, against the old sex immorality of paganism which refused to regard women as personalities. Roman opinion was accustomed to seeing a husband divorce a wife when he tired of her. It tolerated and expected excitements and amusements conducted for profit, which broke down normal control. Against sensuality

and hard-heartedness Luke's book issued a protest: high-minded readers would agree.

In Luke's opinion the distinctive mark of a Christian was an attitude of joyful, active, and creative love, as he showed in a dozen places. He told about Paul singing in the inner prison, and about the brethren in Jerusalem who ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people, and about Jesus' promise of blessedness on earth. But could that attitude be reconciled with the blackness and gloom of the death by torture the Lord had suffered? Luke perceived that Jesus had taken the same triumphant attitude into the terrible experiences at the end. Death had been, apart from its deeper meaning, the triumph of a hero. Luke evidently had additional sources of information besides Mark about the words of Jesus on the cross. He said nothing, as Mark did, about Jesus' cry of anguish, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" although before he completed his book he had Mark before him. His portrait is not of a sufferer in agony but of a courageous conqueror. The three "words" which he records show Jesus' victory over pain, "Father, forgive them," (which may be authentic though not in all manuscripts); "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"; and "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," (which Mark records as "a loud cry"). Just as for the trial he had material not found elsewhere—the appearance before Herod, the order of events, and other things—so for the crucifixion he drew on records, or perhaps memories preserved in the mind of Philip or others who

had been present. Having found such stories of the courage of Jesus, he ventured to correct Mark.

With the resurrection stories Luke allowed himself more freedom in literary form than with any other events except the shipwreck and Peter's return to Mary's door. The Emmaus story is enough of itself to account for the popularity of the Gospel. It is one of the loveliest in any literature. The listeners on Philip's roof were privileged people. Yet Luke took pains to point to his evidence. He had gotten the story on the authority of Cleopas. He was arguing with people who knew all about the mystery-cults and their mythical heroes, and he brought out this incident and others told more concisely to prove that only twenty-seven years before his visit to Palestine, men and women had had actual experiences of Jesus after death. These experiences had a contact with reality which to him made them very different from those of mystery-worshipers. Luke had learned long before, in Troas and elsewhere, to believe that ethical guidance came from Jesus. He himself had drawn illumination and joyful release from fellowship with the historic Lord who had gone about doing good. And in Palestine he found evidence that it was the actual Jesus, risen after death, who had guided him and the others.

In Palestine, Luke must often have asked of those he met, "Did you yourself see Jesus?" or "What was Jesus' personal appearance?"; he must have come to know it well but he never to our knowledge recorded it. He confined himself to fields of human value with no descriptions of people nor of nature. Jesus had de-

scribed the lilies, but Luke's standards were Greek, and so he omitted descriptions we would like to possess. Yet the picture of Jesus is unmistakable: a champion of the rights of man, a triumphant victor over pain, an imperial figure who called men to judgment. The courts had been wrong; this was no anti-social rebel; but neither had he been negligible.

One wonders why Luke described the birth and childhood of Jesus. He was not interested in children, as he shows in using Mark. But he could expect his Greek and Roman readers to ask questions about the early days. In the third chapter of the Gospel he included a statement of the ancestry of Joseph, who was of the house of David, while he had stated that Mary was kinswoman of Elizabeth, who was of the daughters of Aaron. The genealogy of Joseph is evidently reliable, for it was that of James the brother of Jesus, the actual head of the Christians in Jerusalem during Luke's stay in Palestine. Some friend of James in Jerusalem probably brought it down to the coast city and put it in Luke's hand. Luke connects it with Jesus rather than with the brother. His interest seems to be primarily historical in these instances.

What we know as the first two chapters of the Gospel indicate that in Luke's mind the Christian movement had had its beginning not in the public ministry of Jesus but in the homes of the pious circle in which Joseph and Mary moved. Luke has given an idyllic picture of home life among plain-living and idealistic people, the intellectuals of their time, who knew the prophets, read great books such as Enoch, believed in

love and God, and looked for the redemption of Jerusalem. It would be hard to match anywhere else in classical literature for standards of home life. Here was an added appeal for the Way.

Much of Luke's material about the childhood of Jesus seems to have come from a separate source and to stand by itself, yet he has woven it into a united narrative. In using it he mentions four times the ultimate sources of his information, as if he expected to be challenged for telling about events of more than sixty years before. For two stories, as has been noted, he cites the mother of Jesus, whom of course he could never have seen, as his authority. After telling of the visit of the shepherds, he writes, "Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart"; and after the story of the visit of the twelve-year-old boy to Jerusalem, he adds, "His mother kept all these sayings in her heart." These two references have no other place in the narration except as stating the primary source of his information. They are like many of the references in Acts to people who do not figure in the story, whom he included as if to say, "This person, directly or indirectly, was my informant." For two of the other birth-narratives he presents people of the circle in which Mary moved as his authority. After the story of Simeon and Anna and their words of appreciation of the infant at his presentation at the temple, he notes, "Anna spoke of him to all them who looked for the redemption of Jerusalem." After the account of the annunciation, birth and naming of John, with which he has left interwoven a record of the annunciation of Jesus,

he adds, "All these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts saying, What manner of child shall this be?" The circle of pious people had included Simeon, Anna, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, and many others. It is notable that Luke named his authority for the birth-narratives immediately after referring to original eye-witnesses who had given him "certainty" and "established facts." For no other part of his two volumes has he indicated his ultimate sources with more pointedness.

Connected with the same events are three lyrics which the church in the first century probably used as hymns: the Benedictus, the Magnificat, and the Nunc Dimitis. They are modelled on Old Testament patterns, the Magnificat on the song of the mother of Samuel. For this series of narratives Luke may have used a written Aramaic, or, as Professor Torrey thinks, a Hebrew, source. If so, he has used it freely, for the language throughout the hymns betrays his particular choice of words.⁵ When Luke wrote them in his Gospel, the hymnology of the Church in the Greek language had definitely begun. At that very time Paul was writing to the Christians in Colossae to sing with grace in their hearts. Luke's greetings to them, which Paul mentions, might well have been to send the words of some of these hymns.

An early summary of Luke's distinctive interest came in the second century from an eastern Christian who became bishop in what is now France, Irenaeus of

⁵ von Harnack, Adolph, *Date of the Acts and Synoptic Gospels*.

Lyons. He was a shrewd and discerning reader of the Gospels and wrote, "We have known through Luke alone . . . how we should invite the poor and feeble who cannot recompense us; also about the parable of that rich man who stored the goods; likewise of the rich man who was clothed with purple and fared sumptuously, . . . and that conversation he had with Zaccheus the publican, and about the Pharisee and the publican who prayed at the same time in the Temple,"⁶ and so on. Even in an early age the church noticed the social interest of this missionary physician.

The summer passed, the second rainy winter came on Caesarea, when the olives had been harvested and the figs were drying on the roofs of the village houses, and he prepared his story of the beginnings of Christianity. Preserving the answers he had gotten to his questions, and the stories he had gathered from the villages and the cities, the beloved physician saw that his facts made a harmonious whole. He did not classify them geographically, nor to show Jesus' movement from district to district, nor as a series of conflicts, but let them give a picture of Jesus at work on people's lives, and on current situations. Thus they form a continuous account of the impact of Jesus on society, and one which moves towards a climax. He looks ahead to the triumph of the Spirit of Jesus over wrong.

But he has not yet completed his Gospel. He is to add other material later, and probably it is after he has reached Rome.

⁶ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, III., 14, 3, in Ante-Nicene Christian Library, vol. V., p. 317.

IX

And So to Rome

THE decision to appeal Paul's case to the Supreme Court was of course not a hasty judgment but a long-considered one. It came of necessity; Paul's friends could not bring the case to trial in spite of all their efforts. The governor had been afraid, and his palms had itched. When their prayers had been answered and Festus had replaced him, they found that the new governor was unwilling to break a two years' precedent for a prisoner with a record of countless arrests and eight legal beatings. To appeal was almost the only recourse. Away from the local situation, particularly in Italy, where the state was tolerant of individual visions and of organized religions, they would probably find a different attitude. They had on their side the precedent of Gallio's decision, and there was hardly a weightier name in the year 58. Paul's Greek friends, Timothy and the others, seem to have been confident of the justice of the Roman courts; Luke outspokenly so. In the *Acts* we get from Luke a different slant on the Empire from that in *Dio Cassius*, with his cynicism about the decline of morals, or in *John of Revelation*, with his determination to break an evil system. One can hardly imagine the Palestinian members of the circle urging an appeal to Rome whose power they

feared and hated. Paul, who had to take the responsibility, saw that there was only one thing to do, and that was to stand at Caesar's judgment seat.

The third gray, dusty, rainless summer passed, and still to their growing alarm they had not departed to Italy. *Summer* was the only season to sail the waters of the Mediterranean. Paul had always made it a point to come to Jerusalem for Pentecost in June rather than for the Passover in the Spring, when maritime travel was dangerous. In September the imperial officer of the Augustan cohort or *frumentarii*, which Professor Clark has suggested was the intelligence department of the army, found a ship, and at last they sailed, Paul and Aristarchus as prisoners, Luke probably as surgeon. We do not know what became of the other prisoner Epaphras.

First century Christians knew danger at first hand, and the voyage to Italy was another long-drawn-out and perilous adventure. They had a rough journey up the coast, their little ship exposed to the strong westerly winds. The writer has seen heavy waves on the Mediterranean in winter twist the ship's capstan loose, though it had been securely bolted to the steel deck; then tear loose from the ship its heavy steel double prow, used for protection in those war days against mines. In a rather small wooden ship¹ the sea was terrifying. At Myra, Paul and the rest transferred to a wheat ship from Alexandria. The officer Julius was eager to reach home and listened to the wrong advice. Paul knew

¹ The Vatican codex says she carried seventy-six as her full complement, Acts 27:37.

better, and so did Luke. Paul had made at least eight crossings and had already been in three shipwrecks.

It was "unusual weather," long-continued. Their wheat ship was blown by a strong easterly wind for fourteen days across ten degrees of longitude, and after the first day of the storm leaked almost continuously. They had a terrific struggle with the sea, and in the struggle Paul steadied the whole crew and gave them courage. The mental and nervous strain on those in charge of a ship in a storm is great, and they found him a man of ideas and personal magnetism. They beached the sinking ship on the island of Malta, and the crew came ashore on planks after a night of great distress. Luke and his chief came through with credit. They saved no baggage except what they could carry around their necks. All Luke's notebooks were lost except what he probably carried with him in a metal tube, the method by which some Palestinians carry valuable parchments to this day.

They spent the winter on the island where they landed, with its crinkled hills as one sees it by day from the sea. There they made the acquaintance and gained the friendship of its chief man, Publius. After recuperating, both Luke and Paul treated the sick. Luke's language, always carefully chosen, intimates that he practised medicine. The governor's father was laid up with fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and prayed and laid his hands on him and treated him. "When this was done," says Luke, "the rest also that had diseases in the island came and were cured (the word is, probably, treated); who also honored

us with many honors; and when we sailed they put on board such things as we needed." The first century respected its lecturers and physicians highly. Luke shared in the rewards, evidently for his medical services.

In the spring of 59 A.D. they embarked on another wheat ship, and the south wind brought them to Naples. Luke does not mention its glorious bay or the volcano or its trimmed pine-trees, but he must have enjoyed the scene. They rested a week at Puteoli, the suburb of Naples, a commentary on the fatigue which ancient travel caused. He tells of Appii Forum and Tres Tabernae without explanation, as if writing for readers on Italian soil. The local Christians were waiting there to cheer them up; one wonders if some were not converts of Peter. Of Peter's presence in Corinth six years previously we know, as he had gone there with his wife accompanying him. Possibly the two had travelled on westward to Rome. Luke defends Peter too pointedly before Theophilus for Peter to be far away. If near, Luke would see additional reason for not mentioning the clash of twelve years before in Antioch between the temperamental saint of Capernaum and his own vigorous chief. The difficult situation called for the forgetting of old disputes and for walking together shoulder to shoulder in the cause on which they were agreed.

They drove up the well-paved, high-crowned road between stone walls, under trees bursting into full leaf; then past the city's burying ground on both sides of the highway, and on through the famous gate into

the city near the Circus Maximus. Rome in the spring-time was glorious.

"In this way we reached Rome," Luke writes without irony. They had planned and hoped, and they arrived in a different way from what they had expected; but they were fighters still. Although Rome was the capital of a population of 120,000,000, as Mommsen estimated, of whom half were slaves, and although it was the greatest city of the world, they were not overwhelmed. Luke was accustomed to great cities. Antioch was almost as large. It gave him a thrill to be in a big city again, and especially to be in Rome. Some of its residents were old friends. People were there from Ephesus and from Jerusalem and from Antioch; merchants, travellers, and old acquaintances in the Roman diplomatic service. Acquaintances of their old comrade Manaen, who had been brought up in high circles in Rome, were there.

Paul asked and got permission from the officer commanding the intelligence department, the *princeps peregrinorum*, at his office on the Caelian hill, to live by himself, though with a soldier to guard him. By the third day he had found funds sufficient to rent a house "outside the barracks," as the unabridged version reads. Some Roman archaeologists place it on the Viminal Hill, not far from the present railroad station, but Barnes believes that Paul during part of his stay in Rome lived in a house a mile and a half outside the wall on the Appian Way.² It had a room large enough for him to meet a considerable group at a time, and

² Barnes, A. S., *Martyrdom of S. Peter and S. Paul*.

to extend hospitality. Many of the Jewish colony were friendly. Luke probably practised medicine, plunging into the difficult task of making a living in a strange city.

Soon after their arrival Luke seems to have taken time to record the story of the shipwreck, their sojourn on Malta and their arrival in Rome, for his account of the shipwreck is extraordinarily vivid. It gives the impression that he wrote it not long after the event which he describes; it is unblurred by the passage of years. It is a great sea story, worthy of a place beside Conrad and Masefield, but with the marks of recent experience. Luke was a master teller of tales.

The story of the shipwreck also gives the impression that it had been added to something already written. It is not on the main line of Luke's story. It helps his purpose only indirectly. It gives a portrait of Paul as robust still in spite of his two and a half years in prison, and shows how resourceful, shrewd, reliable and persuasive he was. But the amount of space given it is out of all proportion to that given other important events, as if Luke found space to spare at the end of his manuscript and added the incident.

In Italy they were free from the tenseness and fear which had prevailed in Palestine. Nero, the emperor, had been liberal, expansive, and conciliatory in his first six years. They were full of hope.

Years of waiting were ahead of them in Rome. Again they had assayed to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus had suffered them not.

X

Luke Uses Mark's Gospel

SOMETIME during the next two years in Rome there came into Luke's hands an important package.¹ It was a hand-written book, travel-worn and mutilated, a story of the life of Jesus by their old acquaintance John of Jerusalem who had taken the Roman name Marcus. The book was in Greek and was headed by the words "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God," and it was an account of the life of the Savior quite different from what his own materials suggested. A section had been torn out of the middle, which may be an indication that it was not in the form of a scroll but a book of sewn leaves, a new method of manuscript-making which can be traced to about that period. Mark had come down to

¹ We have no direct evidence that it was Rome where Mark's Gospel reached Luke, but all the internal evidence, as Cadbury shows, confirms the view that Luke was in the capital city when he wrote the closing chapters of *Acts*. Also, Streeter, Canon B. H., *The Four Gospels*, p. 201, gives much evidence that Luke must have prepared an account of the life of Jesus before Mark's Gospel reached him. Probably he was in Rome when he combined the sayings of Jesus and his "Lukan" source with Mark's material to make the third Gospel. Certainly he was at some place where he could not reach Mark to consult with the latter or to get the missing pages. In the same book Streeter points out that the copy of Mark which came into Luke's hands had been mutilated, the verses Mark 6:47 to 8:27 having been torn out. And since the sea was unsafe in winter, people sent packages in summer, so that a book from Palestine would reach him in the summer or early fall.

Caesarea and had given Paul his endorsement in the dark days after the arrest when it would have been easy to have ignored the comrade with whom he had quarrelled. He had been at that time about to depart to Colossae, and Paul had commended him to the church there. Mark at some time or other, probably before that, had been the interpreter of Peter, who had been in Corinth in the year 54, as we know from Paul's epistle. Later Mark went to northern Egypt, according to Eusebius, who says, "When Nero was in the eighth year of his reign (about 62 A.D.) Annianus succeeded Mark the evangelist in the administration of the parish of Alexandria."² He had had a short but brilliant career and made a contribution useful beyond measure. Mark had written, probably, in response to insistent demands from the churches, and his book must have seemed masterly to Luke and to Paul, as it does to us. Its author was well recognized, even famous, and he had been associated with the outstanding holy man of the church and perhaps of the empire. His book was superbly dramatic and deeply sincere, and it moved to a tremendous climax. It answered the questions people were thinking, and presented an unforgettable picture of Jesus as the healer, the hero of many conflicts, the sacrificial, suffering Lord. It was an authoritative and sensational work. Luke must have seen immediately its importance for his purpose, and to think, as a modern scholar has suggested, that twenty

² Eusebius, 2:24. This implies Mark's death in 62 A.D. Jerome and others say that Mark labored in Egypt. It is only Irenaeus who says that Mark wrote the Gospel in Rome, after Peter's death.

years must have elapsed before he recognized its value, is forced and unnecessary.

The combination of respect and freedom with which Luke used this new book is one of the clearest windows which we have into his character. The manuscript impressed him tremendously and favorably.

He wrote into his own Gospel practically all the main facts of the other. The question of plagiarism in our sense does not enter into the case, for he made all the acknowledgments which the customs of his time required. Roman and Greek historians gave credit in general terms when they took what they needed, and Luke has done that very thing. Luke had in mind the importance of reaching a particular circle, the governing class in Rome, with a different appeal from Mark's. They might be won as friends for Paul and for Christianity in general, and it was perfectly ethical (in his day) to use Mark's material. That he did so is the best of evidence for the authenticity of all parts of the shorter Gospel which he utilized. Some Bible students have thought of the thirteenth chapter as an interpolation by Mark or someone else into Jesus' life, but Luke regarded the words as genuinely and unquestionably from Jesus, although he made some important corrections. The book must have been a treasure trove for him, for it gave him just the material which his inquiring mind wanted. To round out his own book he needed facts about Jesus in the villages of Galilee, healing the sick and defending the poor even to the point of conflict with the village rulers, as well as information about the last week in Jerusalem.

and the trial, and that Mark gave him. So he reproduced direct three hundred and fifty of Mark's six hundred and sixty-one verses, more than half, as well as the substance of some of the others. That parts of Luke's Gospel are drawn from Mark is so obvious, when one studies a harmony, that some Bible students have thought Mark the foundation of the other book, but Canon Streeter has made it seem probable that Luke worked its materials into a structure already erected.

Our main view into Luke's motives and inner drives is our knowledge of how he handled the Second Gospel, and we have before us, in any modern harmony of the first three Gospels, a mass of facts as to how his mind worked. Particularly in the variations he made from Mark's Gospel we may watch how he responded to stimulus, and a laboratory could hardly ask for anything more definite. He did not copy Mark's language as he found it but made several hundred slight changes of words, though keeping close to the original. He gave a score of twists and turns to the thought. The variations which he made enable us to discover Luke's active, throbbing mind at work. These alterations and revisions are facts which must be accounted for. He did not make them unadvisedly. "Why did Luke make this change; and that?" are questions which the Bible student must face. After he has mulled over Luke's corrections he may find an answer for some of them in the idea that Luke had the Greek tradition behind him, a keen sense of the beautiful, and a belief in a divine Mind immanent in nature and man.

For example, some of his changes came from his

desire to make the narrative clear to a Roman and to keep it from grating on urban sensibilities. There is no question that he improved the language of his source, although not at the cost of accuracy. Mark's quotations from Jesus were at best a translation from another language. Luke could be equally accurate and yet use more beautiful words. More than that, the setting of the events was the Palestine of thirty years before, removed in many ways from the center of the world's life and thought, although known to hundreds of thousands of people in other parts of the empire and talked about at every army officers' mess table. Some of the phrases had local associations, and it would be wise to make them intelligible to a Greek or a Roman.

Luke sometimes reacted to Mark's book "The Beginning of the Gospel" by correcting it, and some of the unimportant corrections are nevertheless illuminating. Mark had some passages which told about Jesus' interest in children. As T. R. Glover³ said a few years ago, there had been nothing in all classical literature before Jesus' time which was comparable to the passages in which Jesus gave honor to children. But that was a blind spot in Luke's vision, in spite of all his social passion.

A verse in Mark read, "And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them." Peter was the one who had preserved the memory, if it was his own little boy; Mark had recorded it. But Luke, unmarried and coming into middle age, thought it undignified. So he deliberately left the verse out. In

³ Glover, T. R., *The Jesus of History*.

another passage also, Mark had recorded that while the twelve were with Jesus in Capernaum, in "the house," meaning, no doubt, Peter's home, Jesus had gathered them around him, sitting in a circle as they still do in that land, and set a little child in the midst of them, probably Peter's little boy again. There must have been laughter; the little lad would start them all laughing. Then, said Mark, Jesus took the two-year-old in his arms. Luke could not bring himself to think that such an unfitting thing could happen, and, making his own attitude unmistakable, rendered it, not "He took him in His arms" but "He set him by His side." And in the same story, where Mark has Jesus say, "Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in my name receiveth me," Luke narrows it to one child alone, "this little child"; one must not make too broad a statement. On that subject Luke of course was like his time. It was Jesus and Peter and Mark, with their respect for childhood, who were the innovators. While we respect Luke for the conscientious devotion which led him to deny himself home and wife and children for the sake of the kingdom of God, we see here the bachelor with little sympathy for children.

On the other hand, Luke quite endorsed Mark's interest in the healings worked by Jesus, and took from Mark twenty-three incidents of Jesus curing the sick. Not one temple of yellow travertine in Rome in Luke's time commemorated a hero so humane. A minister has recently said, "Working people think ministers and churches do not care about the physical welfare of people." No one could reasonably think that of Jesus,

nor of Peter, nor of Mark, nor of Luke. Jesus had cared; Peter and other followers had told of the incidents in his work as a teacher and missionary; Mark had thought the healings very important and given them much of his space; Luke repeated Mark's records, in full sympathy with their spirit. This of course is what we would expect from Luke. A new interest in healing people had come into the world with Jesus, partly because of his new doctrine that the dominating forces of the world are friendly and therefore opposed to demons and disease. "Even the demons are subject to us."

Then there were the "conflicts." An interest in people's bodies carries with it an interest in human environment, social atmosphere, and the institutions which mold human life. In Mark's tremendous drama, Jesus had had to enter into conflicts more than once or twice on behalf of people who had suffered from unwholesome social conditions. Mark had again drawn on the village memories. Luke took over the whole series of narratives about Jesus as the champion of the human spirit, the one who released men from social usages which paralyzed, gave them a sense of being forgiven their sins, and lifted outcasts and villagers made unhappy by ceremonial laws to a new self-respect. Luke also retained eight of Mark's references to the kingdom of God on earth and used the phrase forty times besides; he believed in the possibility of redeeming social usages through the guidance and help of God.

But how was the new and better social order to be brought about? Certain passages in Mark, colored by

Palestinian thinking, looked quite different, from the Roman angle, and needed revision. Had Mark caught Jesus' warnings against violent revolution, against Palestine's going to war against Rome, sufficiently? Luke saw that Jesus had never given an iota of support to threats and mutterings such as those which even in the year 56 in Caesarea had made him shudder. Of course Jesus' teachings were revolutionary in the sense that they required a great change in the human spirit, which would necessitate changes in human society, but Jesus had insisted on that full respect for every personality which made violent revolution difficult or impossible. Mark had said that Capernaum friends kept a boat in readiness for Jesus to use; but some blundering Roman detective might mistake that as a seditious act; so Luke omitted the reference. Mark had told of Jesus talking "privately" on the Mount of Olives with Peter and John about the destruction of the Temple; Luke thought it wise to transfer that conversation to the Temple itself. Mark had portrayed the sons of Zebedee wanting high places in glory; Luke cut the story so as to leave no hint of political ambition. Mark had described the cleansing of the Temple; Luke says Jesus made a mere "beginning" of driving out the money-changers. Mark had recorded something metaphorical about the mountain where the Temple stood being carried into the midst of the sea; Luke omitted that, and it may be for this prudential reason. Mark had hinted that there would be a tumult if the chief priests arrested Jesus during the feast; Luke left that reference out also. Luke, not unfairly, wanted his readers to have a truer

perspective on the life of Jesus than they would if he left phrases which enemies might take out of context and turn into charges totally different from the truth. They were innocent phrases but might be misunderstood.

The very willingness of Luke to retain any of these phrases indicates, by the way, that he wrote before Nero's persecution broke, and in a time of comparative tolerance and hope. A well-known news correspondent who recently returned after several years in Russia comments that the G.P.U. had nothing nearly so definite from its victims in 1932, when it sought a scape-goat for the partial failure of the five-year-plan.⁴

Luke's desire to leave no word which might make people think the Christians believed in revolution was partly prudential, but much more. It arose primarily from the feeling which he had learned from Jesus' teaching and spirit, that retaliation, malice, the disrespect for other personalities which lets one strike back in violence, are self-defeating, harmful to the person who uses them, not part of the new order, the kingdom of God, and disapproved by God. Christ's method was persuasion. Human nature, according to this way of thinking, is so constituted that it responds if it is respected. Luke could see that Jesus had appealed to mankind to control human destiny by obeying the divine commands, by choosing steadfast persuasion instead of war or rebellion, and by having faith in intelligence and good-will. Jesus had always

⁴ Chamberlin, W. N., *Russia's Iron Age*.

insisted that man was free to choose, and had power to cooperate with God if he would.

Luke's certainty that Jesus had emphasized deliberate cooperation with God in order to control the future of human history was one of the causes of the many interesting changes which he made in Mark 13, which might have been called Jesus' reflections on the end of an era. Comparing Mark 13 with Luke's rephrasing of it in Luke 21 is one of the most interesting things in New Testament study. He saw that Jesus had not so much predicted strange events to come, as warned his followers and the city, as the prophets had done long before, that feuds and violence and narrow nationalism would lead to disaster. Therefore he strengthened Mark's advice against false leaders by adding, "Go not away nor follow after them"; it was in keeping with Luke's method to bring in material from another source. Mark had a phrase which would be sure to puzzle a Roman reader: "When ye see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains," probably meaning to Mark a sign of the approach of the impending Visitation of the returning Messiah: Caligula's desecration of the Temple,⁵ which actually happened in 40 A.D. But Luke thought that Mark's interpretation was a mistake, and made the phrase a warning against Palestine's going to war against Rome. Desolation would surely come if they did, but it would be the result of their own sin, and

⁵ Torrey, C. C., *The Four Gospels*, p. 262.

not an arbitrary act of God. Luke's "Know ye that Jerusalem's destruction is at hand" is clearly a common-sense and high-principled warning not to drift into revolt but to control national affairs by intelligence. Unfortunately, as Luke had seen, for a generation Palestine had been unwilling to obey, but had gone on her chauvinistic course, and was in the most serious danger. Luke did not know as he wrote, what we know now, that only a few blocks from his house the government was to build inside fifteen years a great triumphal arch to commemorate the victory of Titus, with sculptured bas-reliefs of marching Jewish captives, and the seven-branched candlestick from the destroyed Temple. If Jerusalem had only known in its day the things which belonged unto its peace!

Luke has also told us, by his interpolations into Mark 13, as reported in Luke 21, that he believed that Jesus' long "apocalyptic address" was originally not a single discourse but a composite of many, spoken at different times. So he broke the discourse by adding, "Then said he unto them," and, "And he spake to them a parable," phrases which indicate a change of setting, as Luke 6:39 indicated a break in the sermon on the plain. It seems to include an answer to a question about the future of the Temple; a warning against false prophets; a speech of advice about what to do if falsely accused and dragged into court; a warning not to stay in Jerusalem if it went to war; a parable from a fig tree.

Then he restored, to what Jesus had said, Jesus' statement that the judgment to come was to include

"the times of the Gentiles" when great civilizations would pass away; we do not know his source. Above all he insisted that the judgment would not be arbitrary, but ethical and moral, and the person who kept himself from "surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life" and who watched and made supplication, need not fear to "stand before the son of man." Luke believed that out of the judgment and out of the processes of history, better things would come: "look up, and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh." He brought back the notes of free-will, joy, and hope which Mark had omitted. He made another important change in Mark to show that even in a time of disturbance and difficulty a Christian man is to be not passive but active. Mark had recorded, "He that endureth to the end the same shall be saved." Luke altered it to read, using the same root-word in the Greek: "In your patience ye shall win your souls." To Luke religion meant not to acquiesce but to go on working, steadfastly, actively, adventurously, because behind the processes of history there was God, and the Spirit of Jesus on God's right hand.

Luke interpreted the Messianic Visitation,⁶ or coming, as a delayed event. There is no question that he held to some form of apocalyptic hope and believed that some time his Lord was to come as the Messianic son of man "in a cloud with power and great glory," but his changes in Mark's apocalyptic passages are

⁶ Milligan, G. H., *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, vol. VIII., translates *parousia*, or coming, as "visitation."

practically all in the direction of a delayed coming, a gradual moral and ethical judgment. Luke 23:69, "From henceforth shall the son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God," is markedly different from the parallel in Mark from which he derived it, "Ye shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven." The Visitation was in his view not necessarily to be visible to physical eyes nor a single stroke, but a continuing spiritual event. To him Jesus had been an "apocalyptic" in sympathizing with the common people, in desiring a rapid righting of wrong conditions, and in rejecting a revolutionary and nationalistic messianism, but not in the sense of withdrawing from the world, of waiting for God to intervene.

When he read Mark's tragic account of the trial of Jesus he found in it facts of great importance and value, but he rearranged them, using also his other sources, to make a strong case for the innocence of Jesus. The trial judge had three times, he pointed out, said that he found nothing criminal in Jesus. Luke was of course appealing to the Romans not to repeat the same mistake again against Paul, as well as recording history. One may read between the lines that Luke was contending for the rights of all Christians in the empire. It is as if he were saying to his reader, "Do you not know the sort of thing some of our Roman officials are doing? In hidden places, out of sight, they have put in prison radiant spirits whom the empire needs, needlessly and cruelly. They let

Jesus be tortured to death; they put Peter in prison, and now they have arrested Paul."

Reading Mark, he must have marvelled once more at the strength of the Figure who had inspired them all. At that near distance he could see, more clearly than we, Mark's sources: Mark had used the Sayings, had drawn on the Aramaic-speaking communities for conflict-stories from Galilee, had included a long list of healings, had taken over several longer and remarkable stories. He could see how Mark had sometimes combined two incidents, as in Mark 6:2 and 4, for he had himself conflated various records which referred to the same thing; and how Mark sometimes put together into one long speech many sayings which Jesus had obviously spoken at different times. Back of all Mark's sources he could see the strong, compassionate Physician who had befriended the village people and fought their battles, misunderstood by the owners of the great estates; the center of a tremendous tragedy more pathetic than that of Adonis, and swaying more people than any other tragedy before or since; the tempestuous, mysterious Messiah. Here was a Figure before whom the Romans might tremble, not for fear of their empire, but for fear of God.

Arising early one autumn morning, perhaps, and stepping outdoors to go on the round of his patients, Luke walked with springing step on stone-paved streets and between the windowless walls of city-houses. The sun was beginning to come up above tall buildings. The breeze brought the scent of autumn and made him think of tramping on mountain roads. He

remembered the seventeen years of adventure as a Christian and a missionary. He and the others had lived perilously, and death had often been very near. Mark had recorded Jesus' word, "If any man would come after me, let him take up his cross," as if there had been only one single facing of death which Jesus meant. But for Luke and his chief it had been dangerous and adventurous living every day. So the word came to Luke which he must add to Mark—"daily." And Luke's Gospel reads, "Let him take up his cross—daily." Every morning he must turn his mind to give joyful thanks for another thrilling, crowded day, not without its dangers, to be spent for the great cause which they had undertaken.

The Loveliest Book in the World

IT WAS in Rome that Luke put his two volumes in final form. As Professor Cadbury has made clear¹ from internal evidence, the book was intended for Roman readers. Most of his material he had been in a position to secure in the two years in Palestine; and he must have done much of his writing before the shipwreck destroyed his baggage. But to add Mark's Gospel meant rewriting his first volume; and one receives the impression from reading the first five chapters of Acts that his second volume also he put in shape while he was in Rome, far away from Palestinian sources of information. This may account for some suspected inaccuracies, for example about Theudas, if it is an inaccuracy.

The closing verses give us the impression that while Luke was putting the final touches on the Gospel and the Acts, something new had just happened. The tense of his verb "abode," as Professor von Harnack² said, suggests that the conditions had recently changed. It is as if Paul's case had been called for trial, and the moment to launch the book in its final form had

¹ Cadbury, H. J., *The Making of Luke-Acts*, p. 241.

² von Harnack, Adolf, *The Date of the Acts and of the Synoptic Gospels*, pp. 93 ff.

arrived. We long for light on the events, but they are in darkness. Rome, in 61, was seething, but the secular records tell us nothing of Paul or Luke. We know that the Christians in the storm which came in 64 prized Luke's work highly and preserved it even through the persecutions.

In Rome he addressed his book to his patron and friend Theophilus and wrote the introduction, the first four verses of the Gospel, which applies also to Acts. In it he tells a great deal about both his volumes; he had had sources, some of them written. Many had composed narratives before him. He had not been an eye-witness of the deeds of Jesus but was a second generation Christian. He felt that he had found materials enough for a "continuous" or "step-by-step" account (the word is translated "in order"). His facts were well-founded and certain. Theophilus was "excellent," that is, of high rank, for the title is used for the Roman governor of Palestine. The fourth verse, which is crucial, signifies properly not that Theophilus had been "instructed" in the Christian religion, but only that he had been informed about it.⁸

About Theophilus, the indications in the closing chapters of Acts are clear: he was a Roman. The two-volume book ends in Rome; also it mentions in detail and without explanation places near the city and off the coasts of Italy and Sicily. Luke explained the local color of places other than Italy, but for Italy it was unnecessary. Acts shows that Luke had had a wide

⁸ Jackson, F. J. F., and Lake, Kirsopp, *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. II. So also Ropes, J. H., *The Four Gospels*.

acquaintance in official circles in the provinces; and his friends presumably gave him letters of introduction to influential Romans. His carefulness, when he used Mark, to avoid unpleasant references to "Herodians" is pointed and must have come from some good cause. He softened his hints and suggestions about them even though he did not feel justified in omitting Jesus' stinging description of their unpopular kinsman, Antipas, of the older and past generation as "that fox." Thus he omitted Jesus' warning against the leaven of Herod while retaining that against the leaven of the Pharisees, and also left out the whole unpleasant story about the daughter of Herodias and the death of John the Baptist. The Herod family had been for four generations among the most prominent of Oriental families who visited or resided in Rome. The old king had been the greatest of all friends of the Greek revival, says Ferrero, and in the third generation Herod Agrippa had been a bosom friend both of the Emperor Caligula and of his successor Claudius. The Herods had spent money lavishly in the capitol and must have left a host of acquaintances there. In the earlier years of Nero some of the family were very influential. One of them became "King" of Armenia, another, who turned pagan, received an estate in Cilicia. It is interesting that a generation later the book of Revelation is to mention a certain Antipas as a martyr. Possibly Luke had letters to friends of the Herod family. In his youth he had known intimately in Antioch the Christian leader Manaen, who had grown up with the Herods. But whether or not

Theophilus moved in the circle of the Herods, he was entitled to be addressed as "your excellency," and he was an intellectual. Was he not one of those inquiring souls whose questions are reflected in the saying, "Everyone that cometh to me and heareth my words"? People were coming to the Christian teachers to ask questions, seeking guidance as to how to found their lives on the rock. Even if Seneca's possible knowledge of the sayings of Jesus is a mere guess, one gets the impression that intellectual and even official circles in Rome were not entirely ignorant of the Christian movement in the middle decades of the first century. "These things were not done in a corner."

Here is a legitimate starting point for one who wishes to study the two volumes. E. F. Scott, F. J. F. Jackson, Kirsopp Lake, J. H. Ropes, Vernon Bartlett, and many others have stated that it is a legitimate approach to think of Acts as written for an intelligent Roman. Let one put himself in the attitude of a thoughtful, Greek-reading Roman in the earlier years of Nero before that Emperor had filled Rome with terror, and one finds the book full of new interest. It is the defence of a living movement. It tells about the very earliest beginnings in such a way as to make clear the inevitability of Christianity's advance and increase. It shows that the disciples could hardly avoid adopting such a faith. They did not choose it—they were called to it by divine promptings. Even to the shepherds the call was irresistible, as it was also to the disciples, and to the earnest minds who listened to Jesus in Galilee and Jerusalem. After the crucifixion

the divine influence was still at work; Peter and Paul could not be disobedient to their heavenly visions. No Roman could reasonably expect people who had had such insights to have acted otherwise, and it had all been in line with the highest ideals of the empire.

This approach to the Gospel from the standpoint of a Roman who wishes to know with accuracy the inwardness of the movement about which he had heard, is the viewpoint which Luke expected his first readers to take. That they might "know the certainty of the things" of which they had been informed, is his purpose. Off at the eastern end of the empire about thirty-two years before, a man whose teachings had been searching and tremendous had run foul of narrow minds and weak politicians and been executed. Some of those who had heard him were contemporaries—for example, Peter. But did those outward facts tell the real story? Was there not more? What did the vigorous movement which had begun in that way mean? So one opens the book which Luke has prepared and tries to find out. He finds a story which moves him to astonishment. The book challenges his way of living. It presents a Character who touches the major problems and difficulties of the day by teachings and life.

One who wishes to read the Gospel from this point of view may find help in realizing that Luke discloses his main theme and the crux of his action in the narrative of Jesus' return to Nazareth. It is the turning point of the whole drama to Luke, and the hub of his argument. The other Gospels have nothing like

it, and it represents Luke's creative research into the life of Jesus. To his way of thinking the speech and action of Jesus in Nazareth had to be in the foreground as the first important event of the public ministry of the Master, and as a very significant humanitarian disclosure. Luke followed it by presenting the teachings of his Lord as the backbone of his Gospel. He groups them in five great addresses: the sermon on the plain, the charge to the seventy missionaries, the address about how to pray, the discourse about wild flowers and the heavenly Father's care, and the sayings about how the kingdom of God was to come. In the narrative, which is secondary to the teachings, Luke makes it clear that his Lord brought new life to society as well as to individuals. To him, Jesus had brought back the best of Greek thought into the main current of human life, and had made it possible for the Roman world to discover anew the importance of the individual.

The bridge between Jesus' life and the resourceful and joyful living of the apostolic age was the succession of resurrection experiences at Emmaus and elsewhere, which pointed directly to Pentecost. The Gospel and Luke's second volume, the *Acts*, are inseparable.

Acts, as well as the former volume, is to be read from the standpoint of one who has been waiting for a book to tell him of events in which he is interested and of which he is eager to know more. It reveals not only facts about the beginnings but also a way of life for which idealistic minds had yearned. Its first chapters tell about Peter, in whom its earliest readers,

especially those in Rome, would be particularly interested, and disclose a vibrant, radiant, creative fellowship of people around him in Jerusalem. Its pages about Stephen arouse admiration and sympathy. "Such a movement," one can imagine the reader saying, "cannot be as bad as people say."

Then suddenly, in the eleventh and twelfth chapters, Luke bursts in with a personal experience of his own, and tells how Peter, just escaped from prison, arrived at the house where the disciples were holding a prayer-meeting. The narrative has been general, condensed, and colorless. Suddenly the first "we" passage appears (in the oldest and unabridged version) like the motif which Wagner uses to say, "Lohengrin is here." An extraordinarily vivid, rapidly moving, humorously told story breaks into Acts. It is nearly tragic, for Peter was almost made an angel because he couldn't persuade his friends that he wasn't one as he knocked at the door. That tale, when the genial physician had narrated it in Antioch, must have made that happy church rock with laughter. He told it, no doubt, in his best bedside manner, in many a convalescent's room in the seven provinces, and Theophilus must have welcomed it in Rome.

From that point on, the graphic, first-hand accounts continue almost uninterruptedly to the end of Acts. It is a rare account of the happy, effective people whose twelve communities in as many cities were all together a single community, united in the bond of the Spirit. And Luke himself is one of the happiest spirits of the circle.

Luke's book merits the title often given it of the most beautiful book in the world. Jerome said of the first volume, "All his words are medicine for the sick soul," and "It has the tang of secular eloquence," and Renan in *Les Evangiles*, "It is the most beautiful book there is." Sir Wm. Mitchell Ramsay, with Professor Adolph von Harnack, brought Luke's two volumes back as authoritative after a previous generation had felt obliged to discredit them. Harnack said of the latter half of Acts, "It bears the stamp of perfect trustworthiness," and of Luke, "Like a genuine Greek he pays close attention to his style and obeys all the rules."

Professor J. H. Ropes in his posthumous volume, *The Synoptic Gospels*, said,

Luke's is throughout a concrete mind, and also interested in his fellow-men, in genuine sympathy for those in distress of body, mind or estate.

Professor F. J. F. Jackson and Kirsopp Lake in *The Beginnings of Christianity* say of Acts,

That it is history and that it is great we do not doubt, for great histories are evoked by great events. . . . The writer was certainly a Greek, and he was also deeply imbued with the tradition of the Old Testament.

The president of the classical association of Great Britain, Chief Justice Lord Hewart, is quoted by Professor A. C. Clark in *The Acts of the Apostles* as saying,

The best short general picture of the Pax Romana and all that it meant—good roads and posting, good police, freedom from brigandage and piracy, freedom of movement, toleration and

justice—is to be found in the experiences written in Greek of a Jew who happened to be a Roman citizen—that is, in the *Acts of the Apostles*.

The classical scholar Professor T. R. Glover of Cambridge in *The Challenge of the Greek* writes of later Greek literature,

Certain other books there are of the First Century A.D. in which the greatest story of the world is told in mankind's most beautiful language—living to this hour in a translation of power.

And Professor Ernest F. Scott in his *Literature of the New Testament* has called the Gospel “one of the most charming books in the world,” and says, “To the skill with which Luke has reported them the parables owe much of the hold which they have taken on the world's imagination.” Of *Acts* and its author he says, “He was the earliest of church historians and has had hundreds of successors, but he is still the most interesting and valuable,” and, “If we complain that he has left out so much, we may be sure that his own regret was much keener.”

To more of his readers Luke is not an historian only, but the beloved writer who has put us in touch with one of the most interesting of all movements, that of the first century Christians with their creativity and effectiveness; and even more important, he has shown Jesus as the clear thinker, the tender friend of sinners, the unflinching champion of the oppressed, the judge of nations, the revelation of God, the savior of men and society.

One who follows Luke must keep his spirit sensi-

tive to human needs, and act to meet them, possibly to the point of adventure and sacrifice; and at the same time cultivate the serenity and spiritual background which comes from faith in God. Such a religion is far from being an opiate. It puts adrenalin in the blood.

A First Century Christian with a Sense of Humor

WHAT Luke looked like no one knows, but every imaginative reader of Acts is likely to have a picture in his mind; the young physician has just gone down the road whistling after leaving an important message behind him. Perhaps he was a man with long artistic fingers, and a mobile sensitive face, with eyes set far apart and ready to tease or to reassure. We are sure that he was a man of high purpose who had kept his sense of humor; an earnest man who never lost his sense of proportion or of beauty; a reformer who never took himself too seriously; a happy, hard-working, clear-sighted person with a touch of genius about him.

Luke seems to have been born with some sense of compassion. His sensitiveness grew into artistic tastes and aptitudes, and flowered under the influence of Barnabas and the others into obligation to human need. This social passion, which is his outstanding characteristic, no reader can well miss, for it is evident from beginning to end of both his radiant volumes. We can see it especially in Mary's burst of thanksgiving, in the song at Bethlehem, and in the first sermon at Nazareth. Let anyone who doubts this sit for an hour with Acts and the Gospel in some modern version and read the two volumes as a Roman would have done, against a

background of business-ruled, oligarchic society. The book is the outstanding document of the ancient world in behalf of mercy against superstition. Seneca, Luke's older contemporary, was a crusader in those days against gladiatorial shows and all cruelty; but far more than Seneca's essays, Luke's volumes are the charter of the oppressed of the Roman Empire. It seemed pathetic to him, that in such a stirring time anybody should spend his days raising mint and rue in a garden and pass over mercy towards man and the gripping consciousness of God. Like the young Moses, he too went out to his brethren and looked on their burdens, and like Ezekiel he sat where they had sat. Like Lord Willoughby Dickinson, who founded the chain of world alliances for friendship, or like Sir Wilfred Grenfell of Labrador, or Toyohiko Kagawa of Kobe, he was on a "research magnificent." A missionary spirit drove him, an obligation to care about the needs of the neglected nine-tenths of the race, caught, though in the second generation, from Jesus.

This sensitivity fused itself with his artistic skill. To be an artist with a conscience is to be powerful. This man carried his passion for beauty into his ideas about relationships among people. He hated the covetousness of silversmiths which made life ugly in the east. He despised the miserable self-seeking of the grafter Festus, the rotten, cowardly injustice of the careerist Pilate, and the greed of quacks like Elymas of Cyprus or the seven sons of Sceva. He disliked the timidity which Mark had shown in Pamphylia. His artistic temperament on the other hand made him a hero-worshipper.

In his pages, though he gives no descriptions, we see the movements of Peter, elderly, twinkling-eyed, white-bearded, naïvely gracious, the holy man of Palestinian villages, a bit quaint when brought into big cities but always a man; and the resourceful, adventurous steadfastness of the barrel-chested Paul, with his hooked nose, sparkling eyes, winning intonations, and great capacity for friendship, fearlessly challenging wrong in a dozen cities with words of love and power. Luke could never have hewn to the line as did Paul, but he admired Paul passionately. No one can ever forget the succession of pictures which he gave of the Founder of the movement to which he belonged—"He entered, as was his custom, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read"; "When he ceased one of his disciples said unto him, 'Lord, teach us to pray'"; "Many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod one upon another."

His artistic temperament showed itself in his love of accuracy. Acquaintance with the synagogues and their carefulness in recopying their scriptures may have stimulated it. One of the recurring miracles about Luke is his refusal to let romance creep into his record. Since we can read at first hand one of his great sources, we know that he was fair to it, painstaking in its use, willing to retain its statements even against his own prejudices. We must not expect Luke to tell all he knows, about Paul at least, but his work is genuine and strong. Professor Kundsint lists Luke's peculiarities, but admits that primitive Christianity had the same tendencies; perhaps Jesus himself inspired them: to

think of salvation as present, of Christian life as one of enthusiasm; to be interested in Gentiles; to have a wide social outlook; to admire heroes.

Luke knew the writer's art. He knew how to lay out a plan for his book; to Jesus he gave fifty-two per cent of the space, to Paul twenty-nine per cent, and to Peter thirteen per cent. No one can well miss his parallel between Peter and Paul, each obeying his vision and following the gleam, or between Paul and his Lord, each suffering under unjust charges. Such an artist could have given the abrupt ending of *Acts* only because he wrote before Paul's case had been decided. He put strength and beauty into the phrases with which he began and ended his topics: "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him" are memorable words; even in translation his sentences are beautiful. He took Mark's idioms and local references and turned them into more urbane language. He was a Greek both in speech and in tastes.

An artist is often an individualist whose eyes are fixed on his own job. He wants it to be so beautiful that he cannot bear to let others take part of the responsibility. So the French, who are artists, are naturally poor colonial administrators. But Luke, although he did not get on well with Mark, and although he was never close enough to Paul to have his name head an epistle, was not an extreme individualist. Paul called him "fellow-worker" and "beloved." He was well socialized.

His moral earnestness kept him from crying out when he was in pain as the artistic temperament is

likely to do. An intellectual in social reform is sometimes a dilettante; one of the famous Russian paintings shows several tall, bespectacled, white-collared students in bathrobes, listlessly handling shovels in Siberia after their rebellion failed in 1830. But Luke was not lily-fingered. In his writings are many phrases such as: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye," "We must obey God rather than men," "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom." While Luke keeps himself out of focus in his pictures and lets us read nothing of his sufferings, we need not doubt that he too felt the stripes or the lictors' rods. It took courage to withstand the currents of popular opinion.

A sense of humor is part of his artistic temperament; he couldn't help it. He resembles Kagawa in more than two or three respects: sensitiveness, artistic insight, intellectual breadth, a tendency to asceticism, personal mysticism, and especially humor. His uncontrollable chuckle was likely to break out in all sorts of places—even at a prayer-meeting. Fortunately he didn't keep it out of his written work. Without the twinkle in his eye he might have alienated us by over-zealousness, for he was an earnest social reformer and missionary. However, he could see the incongruous in the serious things he told about, and he has let us enjoy with him such unexpected things as Zaccheus up a tree; four ingenious and smiling villagers tearing a hole in the ceiling of Peter's village home when the thronging crowd kept them from the door; the rich and assuming Simon taken down a peg when he heard

think of salvation as present, of Christian life as one of enthusiasm; to be interested in Gentiles; to have a wide social outlook; to admire heroes.

Luke knew the writer's art. He knew how to lay out a plan for his book; to Jesus he gave fifty-two per cent of the space, to Paul twenty-nine per cent, and to Peter thirteen per cent. No one can well miss his parallel between Peter and Paul, each obeying his vision and following the gleam, or between Paul and his Lord, each suffering under unjust charges. Such an artist could have given the abrupt ending of *Acts* only because he wrote before Paul's case had been decided. He put strength and beauty into the phrases with which he began and ended his topics: "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him" are memorable words; even in translation his sentences are beautiful. He took Mark's idioms and local references and turned them into more urbane language. He was a Greek both in speech and in tastes.

An artist is often an individualist whose eyes are fixed on his own job. He wants it to be so beautiful that he cannot bear to let others take part of the responsibility. So the French, who are artists, are naturally poor colonial administrators. But Luke, although he did not get on well with Mark, and although he was never close enough to Paul to have his name head an epistle, was not an extreme individualist. Paul called him "fellow-worker" and "beloved." He was well socialized.

His moral earnestness kept him from crying out when he was in pain as the artistic temperament is

likely to do. An intellectual in social reform is sometimes a dilettante; one of the famous Russian paintings shows several tall, bespectacled, white-collared students in bathrobes, listlessly handling shovels in Siberia after their rebellion failed in 1830. But Luke was not lily-fingered. In his writings are many phrases such as: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye," "We must obey God rather than men," "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom." While Luke keeps himself out of focus in his pictures and lets us read nothing of his sufferings, we need not doubt that he too felt the stripes or the lictors' rods. It took courage to withstand the currents of popular opinion.

A sense of humor is part of his artistic temperament; he couldn't help it. He resembles Kagawa in more than two or three respects: sensitiveness, artistic insight, intellectual breadth, a tendency to asceticism, personal mysticism, and especially humor. His uncontrollable chuckle was likely to break out in all sorts of places—even at a prayer-meeting. Fortunately he didn't keep it out of his written work. Without the twinkle in his eye he might have alienated us by over-zealousness, for he was an earnest social reformer and missionary. However, he could see the incongruous in the serious things he told about, and he has let us enjoy with him such unexpected things as Zaccheus up a tree; four ingenious and smiling villagers tearing a hole in the ceiling of Peter's village home when the thronging crowd kept them from the door; the rich and assuming Simon taken down a peg when he heard

Jesus' quiet sentence, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee"; Peter and John, of all people, being asked for money, when of silver and gold they had none; of Peter dragged to the upper room in Joppa and made to look at the garments which a good woman had sewed before she died; of the unevenly-developed people in Jerusalem who, hearing about Peter's admitting Cornelius to baptism, said, "So God has actually allowed the Gentiles to repent and live!"¹; of silversmiths hit in the pocket-book but crying out that loyalty to Diana moved them; of a Roman colonel aghast when he heard the supposed lowly rioter claiming Roman citizenship; of sailors on the freighter caught shamefaced and trying to steal away in the ship's only boat. He knew how to ridicule people but does it sparingly and without becoming sarcastic. His joyousness bubbles out through all his work. No wonder Paul called him beloved. His humor came from a deep understanding of human life. Kagawa, who also is a sensitive soul and a poet, says, "Laughter must be our weapon in overthrowing vanities of every kind. More powerful than pistols, mightier than dynamite, is laughter to dispel the host of entrenched idols of our day."

Luke shows his own happy character from the first chapter of the Gospel to the last chapter of Acts. His first pages quiver with the joy of beauty and freedom and creativeness. They give a picture of village life in lovely Palestine, with its terraced hills and blue skies, and its thoughtful, pious people, full of faith and hope. The songs of the first two chapters of the

¹ Acts 11:18, Moffatt.

Gospel are Luke all over, or, to be truer to the facts, he is the songs all over, for his spirit echoes their exuberance and social passion: "My soul doth magnify the Lord; he hath filled the hungry with good things." One can imagine blasé friends of Theophilus reading with avidity those pages some morning in Rome, and finding a thrill, then giving the book immense popularity, perhaps even making Luke a best seller. Those who felt the appeal of idealism would read farther in the Gospel and be stirred by Luke's account of Jesus in Nazareth announcing that his work was to bring good tidings to the poor and freedom to the oppressed. Reading still farther, they would be moved by parables—the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the publican in the Temple—and by the words which taught love instead of hate. They might catch, as they read farther, the lightness of step and joyousness of voice of the early community in Jerusalem, meeting with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. At the very end of his manuscript they would see Paul in prison, still confident and happy even under the dark clouds. The Way as he showed it was a life of glad service, of ethical fervor, of anxiety-conquering joy, and of radiant faith.

Can optimism like Luke's be realistic or must it be merely shallow? Sometimes an optimist is a superficial fellow with an escape-mechanism of fancy and romance; dreaming that the world will automatically grow better. Luke is not the type of liberal who shuts his eyes to ugly things. He has seen rank injustice and gross inefficiency in his Roman government, unready

to adjust its creaking, outgrown, small-state machinery to the load of world management. He lives too close to the death of Jesus to gloss over the black tragedies which fear, pride and selfishness cause. He faces the danger of the killing, torturing cross; he has preached it and experienced it; "daily" he has added to Mark's sentence. But he knows that good things are as real as ugly ones. He believes in the Roman republic and shows his confidence in it, page after page; he exults when he writes of how Roman citizenship has silenced little-minded officials; he gloats over Gallio's decision. He does not think that the state is hopelessly bad. He prepares the way for the Fourth Gospel in pointing out that Jesus was not a criminal nor a fanatic nor even an ascetic. His attitude is markedly different from that which the later writer, John who wrote Revelation, is to show. The latter, writing in the last decade when the emperor Domitian was persecuting the Christians, despairs of the state. He sees no hope that the government might become tolerant. He and his associates have set out to break the existing social order. They see no good in it and give it no quarter. But Luke believes that the existing social order may be redeemed. His attitude is nearer that of the liberal who has not lost hope than of the despairing pietist or of the caustic revolutionist. His faith is a tonic to disillusioned men and women. His age, like ours, was one of expansion; the empire had set up that united states of the Mediterranean basin and of Europe of which economists dream today, without autarchic nationalisms. Like ours it was failing to control properly the inborn impulse to

hoard. Because of that failure some of the leading thinkers of his day as of ours accused man of having in himself the seeds of his own destruction. But Luke believed in man. He looked for the kingdom of God, with recovery of sight to the blind, and good tidings for the poor, the ending of gladiatorial and nationalistic murder, exploitation, superstition, disease. He saw the immediate task ahead—to live with the thrift instinct sublimated by the idea of stewardship into a higher self-respect, the sex instinct refined into family loyalty or into art, and the social instinct developed into brotherliness. Zaccheus is converted to pity, simplicity, justice, and joy.

The inner cause of his serenity and courage and optimistic realism was undoubtedly some sort of religious experience or insight, often repeated. He had long ago broken through to a sense of divine imperative. He was aware of the unrefusuable will of the mercy-requiring, serenity-giving Spirit. He had discovered the Jesus-like God. Therefore a compulsion was on him to seek joy, to love beauty, to be a friend to those around him, to set going movements which would help the common people, to be world-minded, to be prayerful. Religious experience, says Professor Hocking, is the source of artistic and creative impulse, and in Luke's case creativity followed his growing comradeship with active Spirit, surprisingly so. A red lily on the hill, a ship dropping anchor, surf breaking on a jagged yellow coast, a song in a village home, a remark in conversation which opened new vistas, a written word with a challenge in it, a well-planned speech, moved him

strangely, or had some new meaning, once hidden and now plain. He found himself seeing qualities in people which he had never thought were there, and attempting projects which once would have seemed far away and some bigger person's business. Ideas came flocking to him but without their old confusion, and he could do with ease things which once would have seemed impossible. Even in ugly things which blocked him he could increasingly see the guidance of Spirit.

The way to this "wholeness" of life, Luke has told us, he believed to be the stern discipline of trying to live deliberately by Jesus' words: "His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man whole," name being a symbol for spirit. In the life and death and survival of his older Contemporary the world's immanent Spirit of persuasiveness and love had broken through into human relationships: "Now God commandeth men that they should all, everywhere, repent." Jesus had brought into human life the standards by which the world of even the Roman Empire was being judged: "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." No one who watches Luke's pen at work can well miss his religious sense of awe and dependence on the numinous Teacher. Whatever effectiveness he had, he tells us, he owed to Jesus and to the Spirit who had intruded into human life in that one. No lord to whom the Greeks looked for salvation had any such truth or effectiveness or historical reality. He seems to say, "O Theophilus, you and I have each in our own way searched for a means by which the pain of the world

might be turned to beauty. Like Seneca we have asked, 'Where will you find him whom we have sought through so many centuries? *Ubi enim istum invenies quem tot saeculis quaerimus?*' Here is the answer."

By comparison with Matthew, Luke stands wanting so far as an analytical mind is concerned; the sixth chapter of Luke is hardly to be compared with the Sermon on the Mount. He exaggerated the cures his heroes made: put Mark alongside Luke's transcription and that is plain. He suppressed some of his facts; Paul is blunter and less politic, for example about Paul's eight beatings, or the collection, or the clash at Antioch. He tended to compromise when compromise might have been fatal, failing to catch Paul's point. He had little of Paul's searching, ranging philosophical insight and contact with Greek thought. Nevertheless he helped bring into Greek life the fervor of the prophets and of Jesus for goodness, and he related it to a personal faith possible to and open for the ordinary man.

He had sense enough also to see that things which happened before his eyes were important, and to reach out and broaden his record to take in the events of a whole generation. He must have known that it was the greatest story in the world. He wrote it well. He happened along at the right moment in history. That is genius. Hundreds of other Syrian Greeks lived in the same environment of mingling civilizations, and might have had the same "public" if they had had his insight and his will. This man was receptive. He himself would have said, no doubt, that he was guided. As in his

travels so in his writing, he was led by "the Spirit of Jesus." Through his self-discipline, his venture, and his courageous action he became himself part of the revelation of which he wrote. It was better than he had any right to dream that he could do.

XIII

The House on the Viminal Hill

THREE years before their arrival in the capital city, Luke's chief and friend had written from Corinth to the Romans, "Whensoever I go unto Spain . . . I hope to see you in my journey and to be brought on my way thitherward by you." The reality had proven to be quite different. Neither Paul nor Luke was in any position to be aggressive. They had planned to come as missionaries, but they had come in a prison-ship. Their minds were full of well-thought-out plans, but the plans had waited for three years, and beside them in their house on the Via Lata a soldier was still on guard. Luke was not a prisoner, so far as we know, but Paul and Aristarchus were. Paul wore a chain, and the missionary work which they had planned to do was impossible. There were to be no fiery addresses in the synagogue, no reasoning in the school of the philosophers, no public lectures in a city which probably would have heard them gladly. They must have had to grit their teeth and resolve that some things they would never mention to one another. Luke never breathes a word of discouragement. Though defeated, the associates were not dispirited men.

The chronology of these events we have figured backwards and forwards from one fixed date, the accession

of Gallio at Corinth in the summer of 51 A.D.¹ Allowing after that, time for the trial and for a long period in Corinth which Luke calls "many days," then time for a visit in the summer of 52 to Antioch and Jerusalem, then for Paul's fourth tour of Galatia on foot, in the autumn and winter of that year, then for two years and many months in Ephesus, and a possible year in Macedonia and "Hellas" (to include the work in Illyricum which Paul mentions in Romans as if it had just happened), we have the party with the collection arriving in Jerusalem for Pentecost in 56 A.D. Two years there and a winter spent on the voyage and in Malta make the date of Paul's arrival in Rome 59 A.D.

Luke and Paul could not see ahead, but the inexorable march of the years was moving fast for them. Things were not going easily. We have more than a hint of struggles to make ends meet. They thought often, no doubt, in those days of the beatitude about the poor. The judicial case had remained unheard, perhaps because the papers had been damaged or lost in the shipwreck. In confinement, Paul, wan and worn, watched the months slowly drag themselves out. Season followed season in Rome; the three years' imprisonment grew into four, still continued. The shadow of defeat came near their path, flickered across it, and darkened it, as the shadow of the great cliff creeps fast and silently across the floor of Yosemite Valley. There had been the cross for their Lord thirty-one years before. That had been a terrible mistake on the part of the authorities; they had been sure Rome would

¹ Deissmann, *A. St. Paul*, p. 235.

not let a thing like that happen again; but yet it might. Something of that kind might be in store for them. They could not miss the foreboding of danger, for they had faced it so often before.

To their growing fear Nero was reaching the end of his period of wisdom and progressiveness. Gradually Seneca, the great liberal, the brother of the friendly judge of ten years back, the great writer a dozen of whose phrases almost match the earlier words of Jesus sentence by sentence, was losing the emperor's friendship. This outstanding and wise adviser of Nero became the target of attack, then sought permission to resign and could not get it, and was plunged into agony, with no outlet ahead but the suicide which was actually to follow. Nero was fast dropping down into a state of nervousness and reaction. The Christians around Paul could not have been above human worries and fears. They had come to a time of adversity and darkness. As Luke had written about Jesus, so he thought of Paul: "He was numbered with the transgressors."

The second cold Roman winter passed. The snows melted, and the third spring in Rome arrived. The flowers made the Roman Campagna beautiful. Paul's house, we believe, was just outside the old wall, north of the Forum,² west of the house of Pudens where Peter reputedly had lived. That was the year Josephus visited Rome and saw that conditions were tense. In the next year, 62, across the Mediterranean their friend, the head of the Jerusalem church, James, the brother

² Barnes, A. S., *Martyrdom of S. Peter and S. Paul*, 1933, p. 43.

of Jesus, was to be stoned to death on Golgotha. Three years later, the fire in Rome was to break out, Nero was to blame it on the Christians, and the populace to begin to massacre them.

But Luke was courageous. With the spring came a change in the situation of whose details we do not know, but about which Luke more than hints in the closing verses of his book. The quivering word "abode" is in a tense whose nuance denotes the end of a period.³ Perhaps the time for the trial had come; we are not sure. A sense of the poignancy of his life must have come over Luke. The work which he had done in his youth might after all have to be the main missionary work of life, although he had dreamed differently. For a humanitarian career he had renounced the joys of home and married comradeship; and now his work had come to defeat. He had wanted to go into Bithynia, but in that too he had been blocked. He had expected a very short stay in Palestine on that ill-fated errand of benevolence, but it had dragged into two years, and the process was repeating itself in Rome. The black clouds were over them. In the city near them lived Nero in his palace, Nero the terrible. Not far ahead was the terror, the hue and cry, the hunt for scapegoats.

Was he to give up hope? The closing verses of *Acts* show him unflinching and leaving no stone unturned. There was still a fighting chance, "The sect was everywhere spoken against," and the odds were tremendous, but there is no whimper from him, nor about him any

³ von Harnack, A., *Date of the Acts*, p. 94.

hint except of courage. In those dark months one imagines that Luke strengthened his inner spirit by remembering that even on the cross Jesus had been the victor. When first century Christians met disappointment, they thought of God and were courageous again.

In that time of darkness Luke, waiting, launched his defence on the world. It was an offensive, a drive against Roman selfishness and an appeal to the best Romans to begin to live in a better Way. He took memories of adventures with Paul, his researches about early events in Palestine, his notes of moving stories of Jesus' life and parables, materials which he had carefully chosen from other books about Jesus, and notes of the shipwreck thirty months before, and fused them into his two famous and thrilling volumes. They are admittedly a defence document, intended as an *apologia* for Paul and all the followers of the Way, designed to win friends for the cause and to attract people to become friends of Jesus.

One reason for believing that the two-volume book was issued immediately at the end of Luke's two years in Rome, that is, about the year 61, and not at a much later time, is the spirit of his work. He carries us through the whole glorious story of Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and later guiding of the disciples through the years, until the reader looks for and expects Paul's vindication in the courts. Then he leaves the climax unstated and the problem unresolved. Psychologically it would be impossible for a writer like Luke to have done so if he had known the answer. "Through eight whole chapters," says Harnack, "St. Luke keeps his

readers intensely interested in the progress of the trial of St. Paul." He could not have left us in suspense if the trial had reached its close before he laid down the pen. To suggest, as some commentators do, "Perhaps the outcome was too well known to need telling" is a pure assumption with no evidence whatever. "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with enemies" some scholars remind us Luke had quoted, and think he was reading back the fearful events of the years 66 to 70 from a later time; but rebellion must have been discernible in the late fifties, and it is reasonable to think that Jesus himself had foreseen that the bitter nationalism of his day would lead to disaster. To think that Luke, with his Greek sense of climax, and with his ability to show the parallel between Paul and Jesus, could tell of the tragedy on the hill of the skull and leave untold the tragedy at Rome if the latter had been consummated, asks too much of the reader. Luke's dramatic sense was too great for that. Paul was still in prison when Luke wrote.

To understand what an effect Luke's two volumes must have made on earnest people in Rome, one needs only to put oneself in the attitude of a person who has heard something about Paul and Jesus but does not know with any certainty what they stood for. The book from that point of view is a tremendous argument for Paul and for his religion and for the Lord behind him.

It was unquestionably influential. Ten years later, as we know now, the inner circle of important people in Rome turned for some strange reason to Christianity.

The princess Domitilla, wife of the young man who was heir-apparent to the throne, became a professed and acknowledged Christian and underwent banishment, and her husband himself suffered martyrdom, apparently for the same reason. Luke's work seems to have helped win the intellectuals, as well as part of the proletariat.

What was the outcome of the trial which Luke so desperately hoped Paul might win? No one knows. If Paul had a victory, it was brief. One wonders if Paul was released in 61, to go on to Spain as he had hoped and as Clement hints. Clement's sentence, written about 95 A.D., reads, "Having gone to the utmost bounds of the west he at last suffered martyrdom." This is echoed by the unknown writer of the Muratorian fragment who wrote of "the journey of Paul to Spain"; by Jerome, "Paul was dismissed by Nero, that he might preach the gospel to the west"; and by Eusebius who says that Paul came to Rome a second time and suffered martyrdom. One wonders if he was able to return to Crete and Miletus, as older Bible students thought the epistle to Titus and Second Timothy imply that he did. Or was he kept in prison longer, with his fiery spirit yearning to wrestle in argument with the giants of his day, and to travel and to teach? It is tragic to think of the waste of keeping in prison that marvelous mind with its great creative faculties. Cruelty and blindness have squandered so much of the ability of the race to think in original ways. If he was freed it was for a very brief time. Nero was emperor, and in 64 the fire broke out in Rome. Then came the lions, the

turning of the Christians in Nero's Vatican gardens into human torches with resin in their wounds. For Paul there was the execution outside the walls, and the wealthy Roman woman, Lucina, begged his body and buried it in her garden. Years later the kings of the earth brought their treasure to build the church of St. Paul outside the walls.

What of the things for which Paul and Luke had contended? The revolt in Palestine which they hoped to avert broke in the year 66, and of Jerusalem hardly one stone was left on top of another. The Sanhedrin never became reconciled to the Christians, and the final separation came after the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70. What of the recognition of Christianity as a religion, either in its own name or as part of Judaism? Paul and Luke had argued for that. That too was denied them, and a struggle began between Rome and the Christians, to last two hundred and seventy years. As Luke had never foreseen, Rome turned on them. Although she never dreamed of the iniquity of a totalitarian state and the world was not to do so until Macchiavelli's time, yet she demanded obedience to the state first, even if she had to kill the Christians to secure it. She wanted them to burn incense before her Caesars; but they could not; God-consciousness stopped their hands; they would give their lives for the state but they could not disobey God. In a few years it was not a matter of denying their faith to save their lives but of denying their lives to save their faith. That is the story of the book of Revelation, and of Ignatius, and of the other martyrs.

One thing only for which Luke and his comrades had sought and hoped stayed with them. Much had been taken—popularity, success, friends, freedom and the means of travel and effective work. Yet one great thing remained. They still kept the spiritual guidance which some day is to drive cruelty and war and covetousness and sensuality and superstition out of the world.

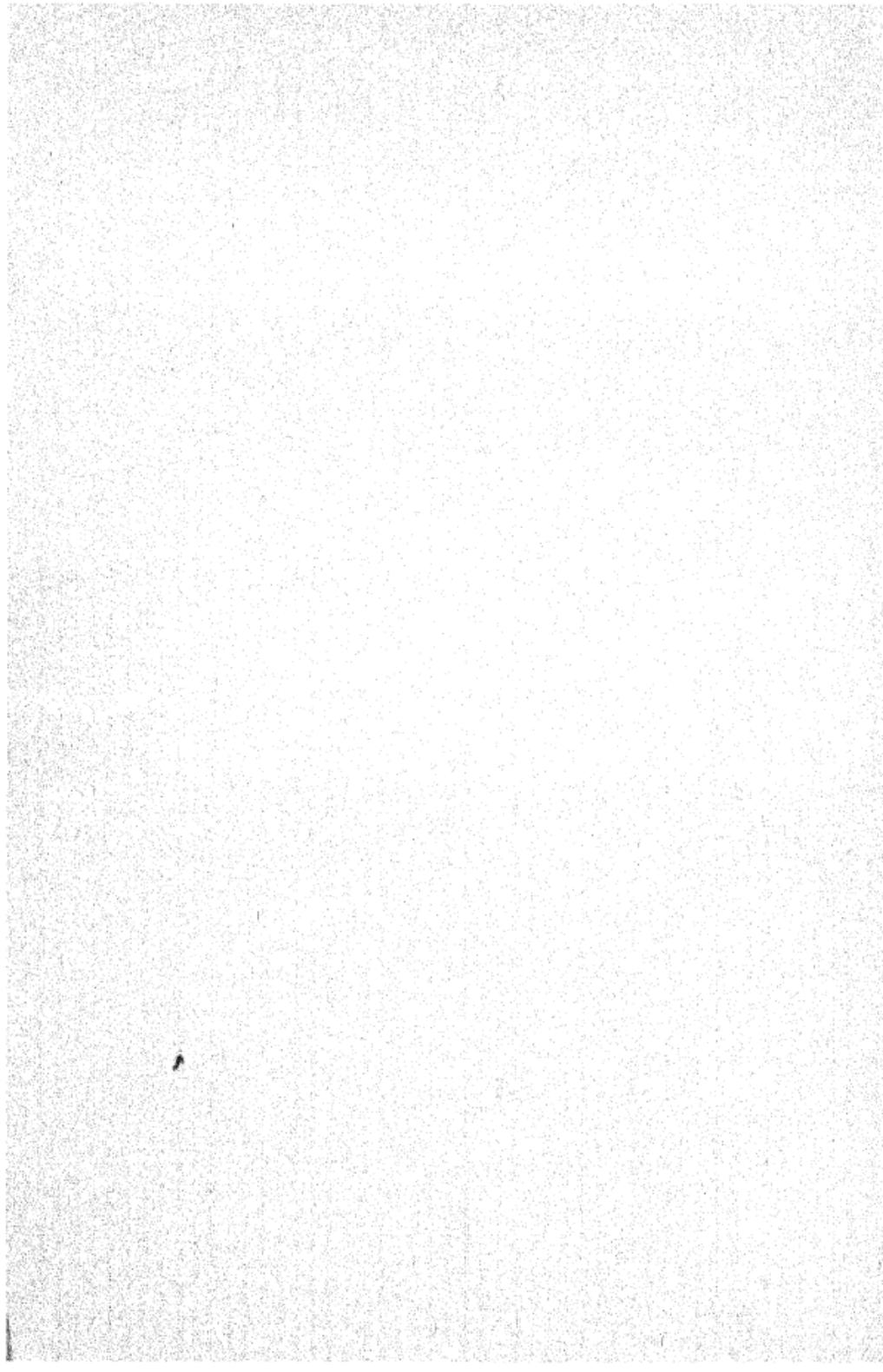
The book, which, as we see today, was the main accomplishment of his life, Luke wrote before and about the year 61, when he was probably hardly more than forty years old. It was a by-product, worked out in a struggle in which other aims were in his view. Then long silence follows for thirty years.

In the year 92 a second persecution broke out across the whole empire. About that time there began another adventure. Of it we may read in an old record which goes back to the year 200⁴ and which some of the greatest historians think reliable. It is in the Monarchian prologue to Luke's Gospel and reads:

“Luke, by nation a Syrian of Antioch, a disciple of the apostles, was afterwards a follower of Paul till his martyrdom, serving the Lord blamelessly. For having neither wife nor children, he died in Bithynia at the age of seventy-four, filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Bithynia at last!

⁴ Bartlett, J. V., *The Acts*, p. 21.



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